24 — 30, 1980

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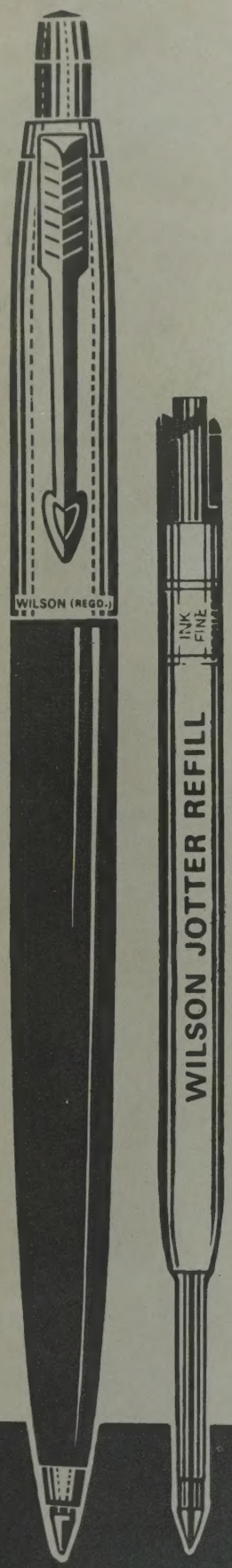

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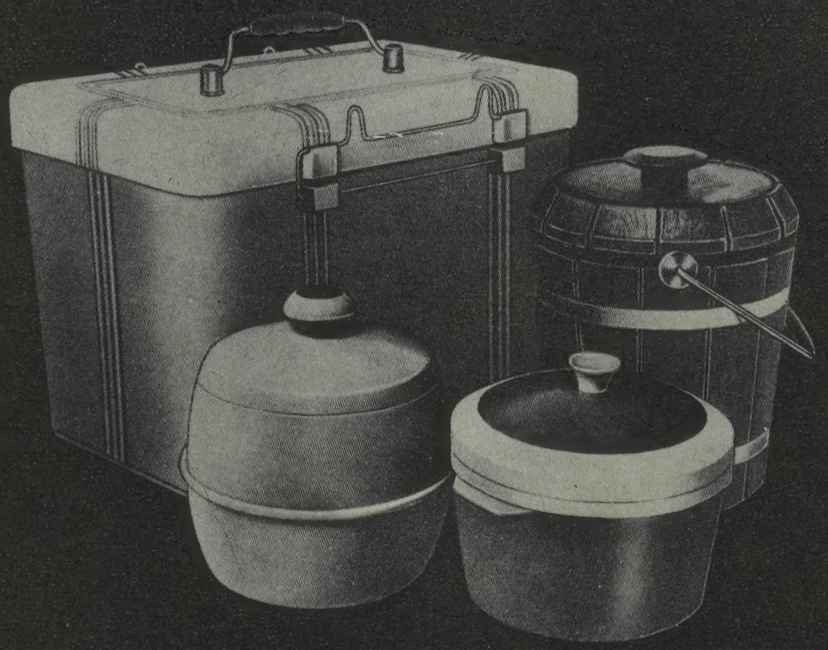

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THIS WEEK

VOICES OF ANGER AND ANGUISH

Time was, not too long ago, when even education was expressly forbidden to them. But change is coming, though all too slowly, and today Dalits are using their education to give expression to the centuries of anguish their people have suffered. An introduction to contemporary Dalit women poets.
Page 10.

THE GREAT SEARCH

The Bombay-wallah's perennial problem : finding a flat that will accommodate at least all parts of his/her body — forget the sea-view!
A personal experience.
Page 28.

AN UNWANTED LEGACY

One right of the child one rarely hears about is the right to freedom from congenital V.D.
The harmful effects of hereditary V.D. are serious and must be urgently tackled.
Page 40.

ALSO

Step by Step Cookery : Corn Croquettes — **Page 19** In a Lighter Vein : The Artless Art of Repartee — **Page 25** A Story For Children — **Page 29** Woman in Focus: Gitaben Shah — **Page 36** Creative Photography: X — **Page 37** Film Interview : Parveen Babi, "Exhausting The Limits . . ." — **Page 39** Kitchen Gardening: Conclusion of our eight-part series — **Page 48.**

REGULAR FEATURES

Your Page/**7**, Readers' Voice/**9**, Short Story/**15**, People Known & Un-Known/**21**, Fashion/**22**, Cookery/**30**, Comics/**35**, Passing Through/**36**, Hiya Honey/**38**, People & Events/**44**, Frankly Speaking/**47**, Horoscope /**50**.

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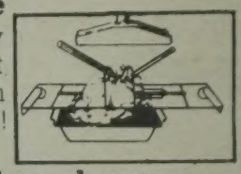

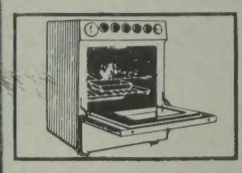

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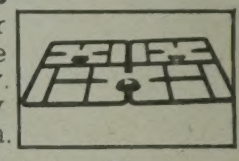

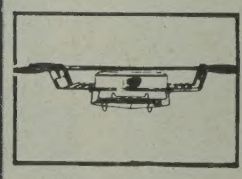

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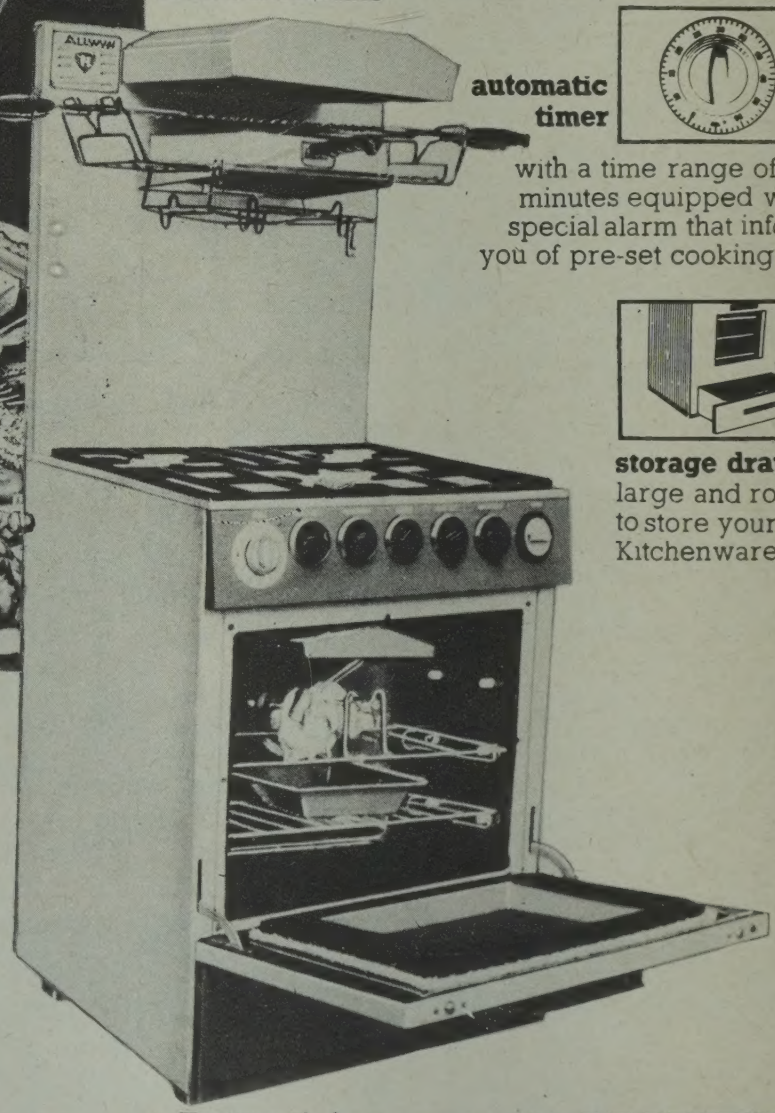

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YOUR PAGE

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1st PRIZE

CHILD OF ECLIPSE

For several days before the recent solar eclipse, we had a stream of visitors advising us to wear green bangles during the fateful three hours, or to limit our food consumption to milk and jelabis, and proffering other sage counsel on how to avoid the ill-effects of the sun being devoured by Rahu and Ketu — with the result that the price of green glass bangles shot up in Delhi the previous day to Rs. 15 a dozen.

If such superstitions were only the excuse for a shopping spree it wouldn't be too bad after all. But, sometimes, tragedy can result from following, too closely, ancient conventions. Some years ago, a pregnant woman, anxious to view an eclipse, went out on a balcony to do so and when, some months later, she gave birth to a deaf-mute daughter it was imputed to this action of hers. Lest this occurrence reflect on the family's morals or pedigree, her brothers-in-law (all post-graduates in scientific disciplines) have kept the hapless girl hidden away from the public eye although there is a training institute for such unfortunates in the vicinity.

In the ensuing International Year for Disabled Persons it would be praiseworthy if the problem of considering such children as retribution for past sins were brought to the forefront and openly discussed — so that no stigma whatever should be attached to them and, given appropriate training, they can be rehabilitated as useful members of society.

MYOLA PEREIRA, Delhi

In this country, almost everything proceeds according to superstition. Horoscopes are 'matched', 'muhurats' are performed, even names are changed to conform to certain numerical hang-ups. To pass a dead body is "good luck", to have a widow around is "ill luck" — and so on and so forth. How can we ever progress with idiotic superstitions controlling our lives?

2nd PRIZE

NATIONAL LIVING

We were then vacationing in Ooty. A family from Bangalore, who occupied an adjoining cottage but shared a common dining hall and lounge with us, used to watch with suspicion and criticism, our activities and mannerisms, our mode of dressing (my sarees, which were not of pure Bangalore silk). But one afternoon, to our surprise, they invited us to join them for a game of scrabble. Next morning, they had breakfast with us at the same dining table, though we were non-Brahmins, and in the afternoon they insisted that for sight-seeing we go with them in their car, instead of the tourist bus. The sudden change in their attitude — a sense of understanding and interest, instead of suspicion and ridicule — was a riddle to us. Without keeping us in suspense for long, they showed us an article in "Eve's Weekly" (it used to be a regular column by Krishna Satyanand) wherein the writer had expressed the need for an "Experiment in National Living". This was more than a decade ago.

Even today and that, too, in a cosmopolitan city like Bombay, there seem to be people who continue to live in a narrow world of a 'Hindu Colony', 'Parsi Colony', 'Gujarat Colony', etc. and listen only to their own language programmes on T.V. and radio. A student, in search of his examination centre, asked me the whereabouts of Dnyaneshwar Vidyalaya. The signboard of the school was written in Dev- (Deo or Deb) nagari script only. The Examination Board had spelt it in English as 'Dnyaneshwar'. I told the student that he had just passed the school. "But, that was 'Gyaneshwar'", he said hesitantly. I told him that 'Dnya' of Marathi, 'Gya' of Hindi and 'Gna' of Gujarati were the same, only pronounced differently. He was then convinced, happy and thankful.

MRS. USHA SHETH, Bombay

It is gratifying to know that somewhere, somehow, one of our columns had an impact on a group of people. It was during those days when everyone was talking about the experiment in international living that Mrs. Satyanand had espoused the cause of a much-neglected area: "national living".

3rd PRIZE

THE BRINK OF DISASTER

'Back to Gandhism' seems to be the keynote of the eighties. Whether we have been wise in our choice of Indira Gandhism, only time can tell: but time itself is demanding a return to another kind of Gandhism, the Gandhism preached by the Father of the Nation and it is vital that we heed this cry.

Gandhiji was a worshipper of Nature. He believed in keeping the spirit, the mind and the body attuned to Nature. His passionate beliefs in this matter led many to conclude that he was an enemy of industrialisation and progress, a bit of an obscurantist. Today, however, the implications of indiscriminate and wasteful consumption of resources have vindicated his stand. Man is in danger of losing all he has gained. In his greed, he is emptying the good earth of all its bounty — oil, minerals, forests, wildlife — all its wealth, and turning it into a desert. We, human beings, seem to be forgetting that we may manipulate Nature but can dominate her only at our own peril. To take just one example, the lack of petroleum products has reduced travelling and transport drastically and is confining us more and more to our particular and immediate spheres of activity. Are we on the brink of disaster or dare we hope that Nature will, with or without the help of humankind, restore the balance?

LEELA RAMASWAMY, Bangalore

Yes, we seem to be headed for disaster — that was the 'raison d'etre' of our Special Issue, last week, on "Environment and Conservation". We are tinkering with nature; and nature, a beautiful friend, can make a terrible enemy.

THE LADY IS AMAZING

I would like to share with the readers the rare experience of entertaining an old lady (my apologies to her for calling her old) who had made a trip to our country from U.K., to meet her friends — boarders who had stayed with her in her home in Manchester, my husband having been one of them.

The trip to India to look up her friends meant using a sizable part of her savings. Why? She dismissed it by saying, it was well worth it. How many of us in India, at the age of seventy-five, would think of spending money and time on such visits? Would we be up to it physically? Once we reach a certain age, say sixty, inertia seems to set in and there is very little for us left in life to do, whereas this lady had hitch-hiked on the pillions of scooters, ridden in buses at peak hours to visit all her contacts.

Will our elder citizens, who can afford it, think of travel and friendliness at least within the country?

SUDHA KASTURIRANGAN, Madras.

Your "young lady" is amazing, but certainly not unique — in the West, that is. That certain zest for living, that spirit of adventure even at an advanced age, is something we should emulate but do not seem to be able to do.

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READERS' VOICE

Most articles raise a question, a comment or at least a criticism. Write them down and mail them to us!

BOUQUETS

The excerpts from the autobiography of actress Sophia Loren (March 22 — April 12) made interesting and delightful reading. Your regular feature, "Human Interest Story", has got the power of shaping the lives of many of your readers. Keep it up.

JYOTHI PRABHA RELEKAR, Bangalore.

A POSITIVE APPROACH

This is with reference to the piece, "Enlightened Approach to Education" (April 12). The path chosen by Mrs. Y. G. Parthasarthy in formulating teaching methods with the help of the experience gained from her tour in the United States and putting them into practice here has really set an example for others to follow. If the same approach were taken in the right spirit by others, our education would have a new beginning in its quality, introducing a positive approach towards solving its problems.

R. K. BADIGANNAVAR, Raichur.

CLARIFICATION

With reference to the article on me ("An Enlightened Approach to Education", by Malavika, April 12), I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Bala Bhavan school owes much to Mr. R. M. Seshadri, who helped set it on its feet financially and who, as the school patron, has been helping us build up both our funds and our school. The school is now named after his late wife, Padma Seshadri.

MRS. Y. G. PARTHASARTHY, Madras.

GYPSY CRUELTY

After reading Nanditha Krishna's article on gypsies (April 12) and learning of their fiendish cruelty to animals, I can only say "May their tribe decrease, preferably to extinction"! The tax-payers' money should not be used to help these sadistic perverts in any way, rather to exterminate them. If there's any "gypsy-liquidation programme", I'd be glad to contribute.

PARVATHI MENON, Ottapalam.

MORE ON GYPSIES

The article on gypsies ("The Last of Great Nomads", April 12) was interesting and informative. However, while their cruel animal sacrifices were described, the gypsy taboo on horse-slaughter, owing to their Indian origin, should have been mentioned. While expatiating on their language, and its Indian origin, examples should have been given of Romani words and their Indo-Aryan counterparts. These are: **ek** (Sanskrit **eka,** Hindi **ek)** for 'one'; **dua** (Skt. **dui,** H. **do)** for 'two'; **trin** (Skt. **tri,** H. **tin**) for 'three'; **des** (Skt. **dasa**) for 'ten'; **bis** (H. **bis**) for 'twenty'; **manush** (Skt. **manushya**) for 'man'; **bal** (Skt. and H. **bala**) for 'hair'; **kan** (Skt. **karna,** H. **kan)** for 'ear'; **kalo** (H. **kala)** for 'black', etc.

The gypsies abroad may look like Indians, whether Punjabis or Rajputs, but centuries of peregrination have left their mark on the gypsy features and so there are now many fair gypsies. Their music may occasionally recall the gentle melodies of the Indian musical tradition but by and large it is based on the local folk song and dance of the lands they dwell in. They have practically lost their Indian traditions though some Indian customs and beliefs have survived. A woman in childbirth is held to be 'impure'. For fear of polluting her caravan, she has to bear her child outside the caravan or tent. Gypsy midwives are 'impure' throughout their lives. Corpses also pollute; dying gypsies are carried from their caravans to die in the open. The Indian language has been retained much more than the customs, even though their speech is full of borrowings from almost every tongue of Europe and many of Asia.

ASHA DHAR, New Delhi.

NEXT WEEK

ISSUE OF MAY 31

NORTH VS. SOUTH

The eternal controversy shows no signs of abating. Ignorance and prejudice feed each other and bad feelings abound. Forget East and West, what about North and South? Will ever the twain meet? The two viewpoints.

THE NEW GENERATION

Part II of our introduction to contemporary Dalit women poets focusses on the younger generation now emerging.

AFTER '79, WHAT?

A solitary year will not change the situation of the millions of Asia's children. What does the future hold for them?

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

The axe of compulsory attendance has fallen on Bombay's students. A Young Viewpoint report.

Plus all our regular features.

THE ANGUISHED CRY:

POETRY BY DALIT WOMEN

N. G. Bhaware

AGE OF DARKNESS

The period in Indian history from ancient times down to the advent of British rule was a time of darkness for the Shudras, and more particularly, the Ati-Shudras or Antyajas, or Untouchables (the Dalits of today). All these Shudras and Ati-Shudras were denied the right to study the Vedas and acquire knowledge of Hindu scriptures and Dharmashastras. The "Manusmriti," the "Brihaspati Smriti," and the Gautam Dharma Sutra, not only prohibited the Shudras from receiving instruction in Vedas, from becoming teachers, listening to the recitation of Vedic texts, and reciting the texts themselves, but prescribed most cruel and inhuman punishments for them against violation of these injunctions, which were supposed to be divinely ordained (Manusmriti-III-156; IV-99; X-127; Brihaspati Smriti-XII-12; Gautama Dharma Sutra, XX-4-6).

With such stringent laws, one could hardly hope for the emergence of any poet or writer from among the Shudra classes, not to speak of the Untouchables of the fifth Varna, the Antyajas, who were denied even the simple right of residing within the village communities. The untouchables of Maharashtra — the Mahars, the Mangas, the Chambhars — were always segregated and condemned to live a miserable life outside the village walls. Lack of education, association with learned men, lack of respectability, had killed all urge for progress and ambition in them. They were like dumb driven cattle and could never give expression to their woes in any form.

It most therefore be considered a great wonder that despite all these severe handicaps, there could emerge a family of Mahar saints at Mangalvedhe and Pandharpur in Maharashtra during the later half of the thirteenth century A.D. The Mahar saints were Chokhamela, his wife Sovrabai, and their son, Karmamela. Chokhaba's sister Nirmala too was a saint, and she was married to one Banka Mahar, also a saint.

These Mahar saints suffered because of their being Untouchables and their extreme poverty. The English poet Shelley wrote. "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought." Perhaps, it was because of their great devotion to the Lord of Pandharpur, Vithoba, and their great penury, that the compositions or Abhangas of these Untouchables are so sweet.

Sometimes even sorrows and humiliations are bearable if there is bread. But in the case of these Mahar saints, there was neither bread nor any chance of living in dignity. But did they make any protest against all this? Did they blame anyone for their predicament? The answer to these questions is "yes". They did, but they blamed themselves for all this!

Chokhoba says in his Abhanga: "I am a low caste Mahar. My degredation as Untouchable has been the fruit of my past sins. In my previous birth as one Nila, I committed the sin of condemning Lord Krishna, and as a result of it, I have been born a Mahar."

Chokhoba's wife, Soyrabai, says in her Abhanga, "O God Keshava, I am a detestable being, have pity on me, and show me your feet, which would give me solace. The river has swollen in floods, but alas, it could not wash out my untouchability and make me clean; on the other hand, it is drowning me, O God, please take me out, and save me."

In another Abhanga, Soyra laments over her untouchability. She says: "All people say it emphatically that our bodies are unclean and untouchable. But they don't consider our clean and spiritually composed Soul. The untouchability of the body is born in the body itself, and which religion has made it clean? Is there any one in the world who is not born from the part of the body which is treated as untouchable and unclean? O Panduranga, it is because of this that there is untouchability in the body. And therefore, the uncleanliness of the body should be kept restricted to the body only."

Thus, through their Abhangas, which were taken down by a Brahman, Abhyanga Anant Bhat (according to the woman Saint Janabai), the Mahar saints have cursed their low birth which was responsible for their low and detestable status in Hindu society. They blamed themselves, their past Karma, their deeds of sin, and believed that their present sorrows were caused by their past deeds. There was no escape for them.

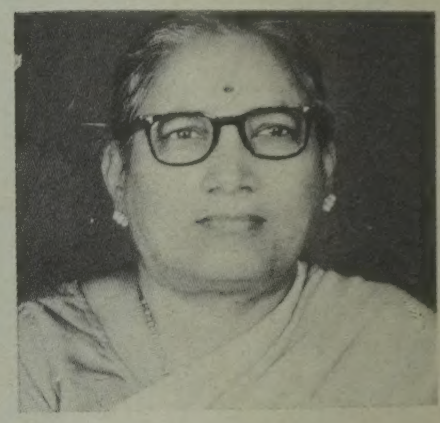
It is a pity, a shame, that not a single voice of condemnation was heard against the Chaturvarnya system in this land of Bharat. The only voices raised against this ugly phenomenon were those of Mahatma Jyotirao Phuley, Rajshri Shahu Mahara of Kolhapur, and an untouchable Mahar, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.

In the 1960s there emerged a new class of writers from among the Dalits, more particularly from among the Mahars and Neo-Buddhists. Many of these writers were men who produced a literature of protest against our caste-ridden society. By now, the list of Dalit men writers and poets has grown quite impressive, and this proved an incentive for Dalit women to take up the pen themselves and become writers and poets.

DALIT WOMEN POETS

It must be conceded at the very outset that the list of Dalit women poets is not as impressive as that of men, but from the qualitative points of view their poetry is no less impressive. In Maharashtra, the most important Dalit women poets today, whose poems have appeared in different magazines and newspapers from time to time are Sugandha Shende, Nagpur; Jyoti Lanjewar, Nagpur; Heera Bansode, Bombay; Meena Gajbhiye, Orissa; Surekha Bhagat, Akola; Asha Manik Khandare, Nagpur; Shaila Gajbhiye, Nagpur; and Kunda Gaikwad, Yeotmal.

I review here some of the most popular poems of three among them — Sugandha Shende, Heera Bansode and Jyoti Lanjewar.



Sugandha Shende

Sugandha Shende is the seniormost Dalit woman poet today. She is an M.A., B.T., and Hindi Visharad, and retired a few years back after a long and very successful career as teacher in Government High Schools, Education Officer, and Principal of a Teachers' Training College. She was instrumental in the establishment of the All India Progressive Women's Organisation at Nagpur in 1973, and is its Working President. She also edits "Yashodhara," the mouthpiece of the AIPWO.

Sugandha Shende's first collection of poems appeared in a book of poems entitled "Chandrapuri Kavi" in 1954. Her other collections of poems are "Maticha Sugandha" (Children's Songs) 1960, "Virato Dhuka" (1970), published by the Government of Maharashtra, "Amrapali — Bhav Pallavi (1977), and "Vividha Rachana" (Miscellaneous Poems). I have selected a few poems for this review. I must make it clear that the original poems in Marathi are composed in a free style, and I am presenting their English translation also in free style. Moreover, only the most important portions of the poems are quoted.

SUTALE SUTAKA: MOURNING COMES TO AN END

In this poem, the poet compares the prohibition of study by Untouchables as enjoined in the Dharmshastras with mourn-

ing, and this came to an end during the British period, and when India became independent. The right to education became everybody's right, and Dr. Ambedkar urged Dalits to send their children to school. Education opened up a new era in the lives of the Dalits.

The mourning of ages comes to an end,

O Brethren, arise quickly,

The dark night has vanished

And the Sun (of education) has arisen today in your home;

Throw away your stick of Talathi,

And your black blanket,

And clasping the hand of your son,

Take him to the village school.

No matter if your son has worn out clothes on him.

No matter he has only the half-ground jawar bread to eat;

But, let these words resound in the temple of your heart,

"I shall light the lamp of learning in my home."

OVI PANCHAK: THE FIVE HYMNS

In this brief poem, the poet speaks of the new values the Dalits are eager to adopt as a part of their new culture. Their ultimate goal is to see that justice prevails in society.

My first hymn is dedicated to the feet of Mother India,

With a vow that I shall send my daughters to school;

My second hymn is offered to the abolition of discrimination

And I take a vow, that I shall uplift my village;

My third hymn is sung in praise of my brethren,

That they should cultivate reverence for human beings;

I sing my fourth hymn for the welfare of the community,

And we vow to discard unwanted traditions;

My fifth hymn is presented to the Nyaya Panchyati,

Which would ensure peace and happiness is every home.

SUKHI JEEVAN: HAPPY LIFE

The Dalits today aspire for a happy life after a long period of misery and want. They want complete intergration with the mainstream of Indian social life; but they are disappointed to see that there is still segregation and discrimination practised against them. The poem depicts the irony of Indian social life today.

Among toilers, workers,

The Untouchables are more numerous;

They construct dams, and reservoirs of water,

And take the pipe line to villages

But ... why should the same pipe have two taps?

One for the Savarna,

The other for the Avarna.

What a system of castes.

If one thinks over it, one gets confounded.

Time was when almost every human right was denied to them — cruelly, deliberately. Particularly debilitating was the denial of their right to study and acquire knowledge. Times are changing now, however slowly, and today educated Dalit men and women are giving expression to the centuries of anguish their people have felt

DOCTORS

In this long poem, Sugandha Shende calls the curse of untouchability a "wound" on the body of Hindu culture, which has become septic, and defies all cures by mystics' mantras and the herbs and pills of vaidyas and doctors. It is only by the call given by the "Bhim" or Dr. Ambedkar that the suffering Untouchables get a new vitality in them. Thus, while all other panaceas failed to cure the wound of untouchability, "Doctor Bhimrao" could diagnose the ills of the Dalits and heal them.

The wound (untouchability) of the Hindu culture

Deepened into the bones,

Like the black bees consume

The beams of an old house.

The ages of Treta, Dwapar, have all gone by

And came there the yug of Kali.

The saints and mystics are chanting mantras,

And presenting herbs, or pills to cure it.

The cultural unity has a deep wound in the bones

That spreads the stinking odour of casteism.

Alas, no cure could be effective for it,

For the head aches, but the feet are kept in plaster.

The wound becomes septic and deepens,

And starts gnawing at the heart

That raises cries of helplessness,

And deaths of the hungry occur.

But who would care to see them?

If the recitation of Vedas fall on their ears,

Molten lid will fill them up;

The language of Sanskrit, not for them;

What was the other tongue to be learnt?

When the heart was filled with grief, and

The eyes were full with tears,

Was heard the beckoning call of Bhima,

And lo, flames rose from the rocks.

The Slave spoke to other slaves,

That he was angry and disgusted,

That his arms were vibrating to demand justice,

And to struggle for human rights.

Kindle the torches,

To light the dark road,

Shame on the religion!

That bars the way to humanism!

JYOTI: MAHATMA JYOTIRAO PHULEY

In this short poem, the poet presents a grateful appreciation of the fine work done by Mahatma Jyotirao Phuley, whom Dr. Ambedkar honoured as his Guru for the emancipation of the Dalits.

Jyotiba lighted the lamp (of learning),

Let it be kept burning,

Let us keep it in mind,

That the greatest work is

To serve the poor and the meek.

PRIYA BHAGINI: DEAR SISTER

The poet addresses this poem to arouse the Dalit women from their slumber of ignorance and helplessness.

Priya Bhagini, awake quickly.

Cast your glance outside your home.

You are no longer a woman, helpless and weak,

You have grown strong enough to support the world.

Know thyself, know the power, and

Drive out the fear from your heart.

Let the lamps of learning flourish,

Let peace and happiness prevail.

Let your wings (of ambition) spread,

And go on soaring high into heaven.

UPAV: REMEDY

The following poem draws a graphic picture of a ruined Dalit family, where the elder son, the earning member becomes addicted to drink and his old mother has to toil hard to earn a livelihood for the family. The sister's heart laments over the unfortunate brother :

How long shall I tell you, my brother,

That you fail to understand,

That we are ruined

By your habit of drinking.

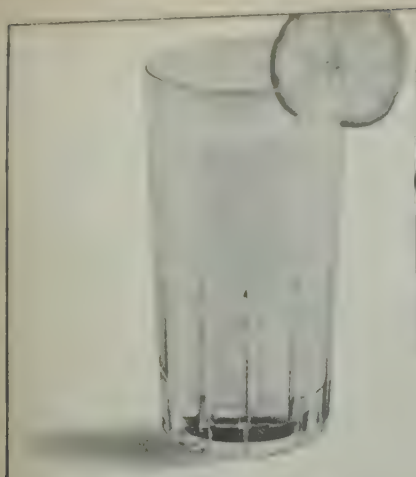
Our father had never touched liquor,

Nor had he ever visited the liquor shop,

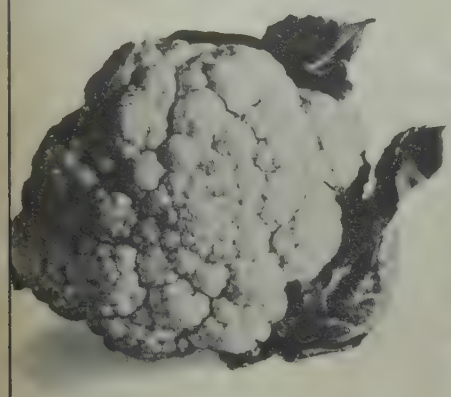
Nor he ever kept company with one who drank.

How long should our mother earn for us?

How are we three to struggle helplessly



Leonard chills lemonade in London



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THE ANGUISHED CRY: POETRY BY DALIT WOMEN

And lack necessities like chilly?

Alas, how should I live!

Will any one suggest any remedy to me?

Thus Sugandha Shende has touched all sorts of themes in her compositions, the traditional as well as the recent themes of protest. She is the leading poet among the senior generation of Dalit women, and deserves our admiration and praise for her noble work.

Heera Bansode

Heera Bansode has been one of the leading poets of the "Protest Movement" of the Dalit women. She is a Government employee in Bombay. Her poems are published in the "Asmitadarsh" of Aurangabad, "Stree", "Purva", "Ayudha", "Bayja" etc. leading magazines in Maharashtra. Among her more successful poems are "Yeshodhara", "Ya Shapit Betawar", "Suryodaya", "Dankh", "Firyad", and "Swatantrya".

SURYODAYA : SUNRISE

Suryodaya or sunrise has great significance for the Dalits whose lives had been filled with darkness for centuries. The Untouchables had been completely excluded from the mainstream of social life and condemned to live in their ghettos outside the village wall. For such lives, sunrise holds a new awakening, a new hope, a new promise of salvation.

Wipe out the deserts from your eyes;

To be sown there have I brought

Pregnant buds of new inspirations.

Wash off the awesome darkness from your faces,

For your sake, have I brought lamps.

I have trodden over the historical curses

With the mighty steps of a storm,

And released your choked breaths.

O dear Rajhansas (white geese) know thy splendour,

And enjoy the triumph of your emancipation.

Comrades, for your sake alone have I brought sunrise,

Be effulgent, be resplendent.

DANKH: DEEP STING

This powerful poem is very popular because of its tirade against the caste-ridden Indian culture of today. In this poem, the poet throws light on the numerous Indian institutions and concepts, Hindu, Islamic, and Christian. The lives of the Indian people have been deeply affected by the 'sting' of discrimination based on caste and untouchability.

Caste has stung man,

Religion has stung man.

Through the orthodox breaths
And the structure of traditions
All have been stung by caste,

All have been stung by religion.
This sting has gone deep

Into the Bible of the Churches,

The Quran of the mosques.

Nay, it has stung even the wind, the stars.

And every drop of water here,

And every morsel of food even,

Caste, and religion, could not escape.

This sting has pierced through the idols of stone,

This sting has bored into

Innocent and soft hearts.

Even friendship has been stung

With the bitter arsenic of casteism.

This sting has caused the towers of humanity to crumble,

This has destroyed the crusaders against casteism

On the cruel crosses of religious censors.

The clasp of the poisonous cobras of Chaturvarnya,

Has spread like the epidemic of plague.

The priesthood has stung the Kshyatriyas,

The Kshyatriyas have stung the Vaishyas,

The Vaishyas have stung the Shudras;

But whom did the Shudra sting?

A cobra stings a man, but

A man never stings a cobra,

And therefore, the suffering Shudra,
Stings himself,

And dies as victim on the bloody altar

Of social traditions.

FIRYAD: COMPLAINT

Heera Bansode's "Firyad" is a touching poem which pierces one's heart with its lament on the helpless Dalit woman who falls a prey to the lustful arrogance of the inhuman devils in the garb of men all around her. Atrocities on Dalit women have now become an oft repeated tale. It is this aspect of the Dalit woman's life which makes mockery of the rights and protection accorded to all citizens by the Constitution of India.

In the following poem, a complaint is taken to the Peoples' Court by a helpless Dalit woman, who demands justice.

My fellow countrymen, to your court

I have brought a complaint.

May I expect justice at least from you?

I have borne the deep wounds of humiliation on my person.
We are being dishonoured and molested,

On the fanatic platform of casteism.

Our character is burnt

On the pages of the scriptures,

While thousands of Dropadis are plundered of their clothes,

Brethren, do not sit like the Pandavas

With your neck sunk low.

Now at least, you should remove the strip from your eyes,

To change this humiliating history.

And will you lend me your mighty and challenging arms

My fellow countrymen,

I have brought a complaint to your court;

Shall I get justice at least from you?

That wicked past which throws humiliating

Charity in the beggars' bag,

Should be blown off by the burning mine of the present.

Let the helpless minds

Accepting the slavery of ages
Be burnt to ashes once for all.
Look, how every breath here is disturbed!

Every ray of the Sun here

Is cursed by darkness!

Even the sky is hand-in-glove

With those blackest clouds;

Even this Earth is an accomplice

In the preplanned conspiracies.

And to wash out this atrocious history

And to fight with tenacity on the battleground,

Will you give me the courageous might?

This complaint of mine

Is against our orthodox culture

Which has imprisoned us in a sealed room,

Which has given us the charity

Of life completely boycotted;

Where the wind

Treats us as strangers:

Where the land

Disowns the seeds we sow;

Where the monsoons

Give us only famines;

Where the water plays with us

The most inhuman game of the mirage.

We are rejecting this

Unclean and poisonous life.

And to escape from these cruel curses,

Will you give me

A bright and auspicious morn?

My countrymen, to your court,

I have brought a complaint

Will you give me justice?

The poems of Mrs. Bansode touch the very core of the woes of Dalit women, and this makes her the leading Dalit woman poet of today, deserving our admiration and gratitude.

Continued on page 43

Everyone's Goldspotting around town.

FUN IS Goldspotting
bitchers will be Goldspotted!
My country for a Goldspo
little misfit Goldspotter!
Easy come easy Goldspotted
My country for a Goldspot

It's not just a new word.
It's a way of doing things...
a great new feeling for fun,
a feeling that comes out with
only one word... goldspotting.

Gold Spot

ting... you'll like it

a dream reduced to ashes

Ajay Skaria

The clear tinkling notes of the school bell floated through the sultry Delhi air — blissful release! Pandemonium broke loose as the unruly students rushed out of the class, heaving heavy bags on to their backs, paying no attention to the frenzied entreaties of the teacher to go out in an orderly manner. The fact that it was the last day before the summer vacation had dispelled all vestiges of fear from their minds.

Only a few boys were left in the class, laboriously stacking dog-eared books into their satchels. Vipin tightened the canvas straps, slowly walked to the door and turned around to take a last look at the room that had harboured him for the year, his eyes dwelling briefly on the bench where his name had been carved for posterity.

His mother made it clear that she did not have much faith in his argument that his intelligence came in the way of his securing good marks

Memories of incidents that had no special significance at that time leapt up from their hidden crevices and like images in a kaleidoscope, passed through his mind one after the other — happy moments, mischievous moments, playful moments, moments when he had wished the earth would open and swallow him, moments when...

A slow flush of pride invaded his being as his thoughts touched on the day's English period. Their teacher had set them an essay to be written in the class. He had let his colourful imagination run riot all over the page and the teacher had been very happy with the resulting effort.

As he walked, deep in the recent past, his shoulders swaying compulsively from one side to the other under the weight of the heavy satchel on his back, he was suddenly seized by an urge to reread his composition. He stopped walking, lifted his bag from his back and, opening it, he extricated the grimy sheet and let his eyes run over it.

The honking cars and roaring trucks dissolved miraculously and he could once again see the teacher eulogising his piece in her squeaky voice: "Most of your essays were mediocre and routine. I mean, you did not really strive to break free from the shackles that bind your imagination to the ground, just stereotyped narratives. But Vipin's was one refreshing exception, not only because of his soaring imagination but also because of his expressive and eloquent phraseology. Of course, not all of you have his command over the language, but you could profit if you tried to imitate his style."

And she had proceeded to read out his essay. He sat through with what he hoped was a very modest expression, but it was hard to hide the pleasure that it gave him, the emotion being all the more powerful because of the sweet feeling of having had his revenge.

Being a short, stout boy, incapable of much physical exertion, he had to put up with

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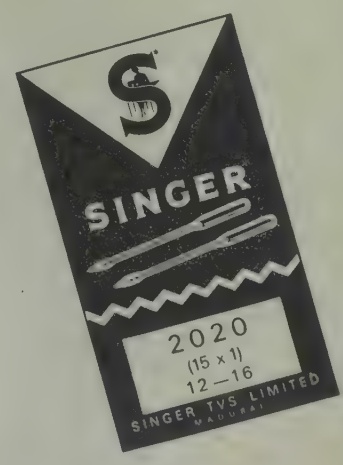

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A DREAM REDUCED TO ASHES

the taunts and digs which give some children a sadistic joy. And as he heard the teacher's sing-song voice reading his essay to the half attentive, half drowsy students, he had felt sure that they would respect him a little more.

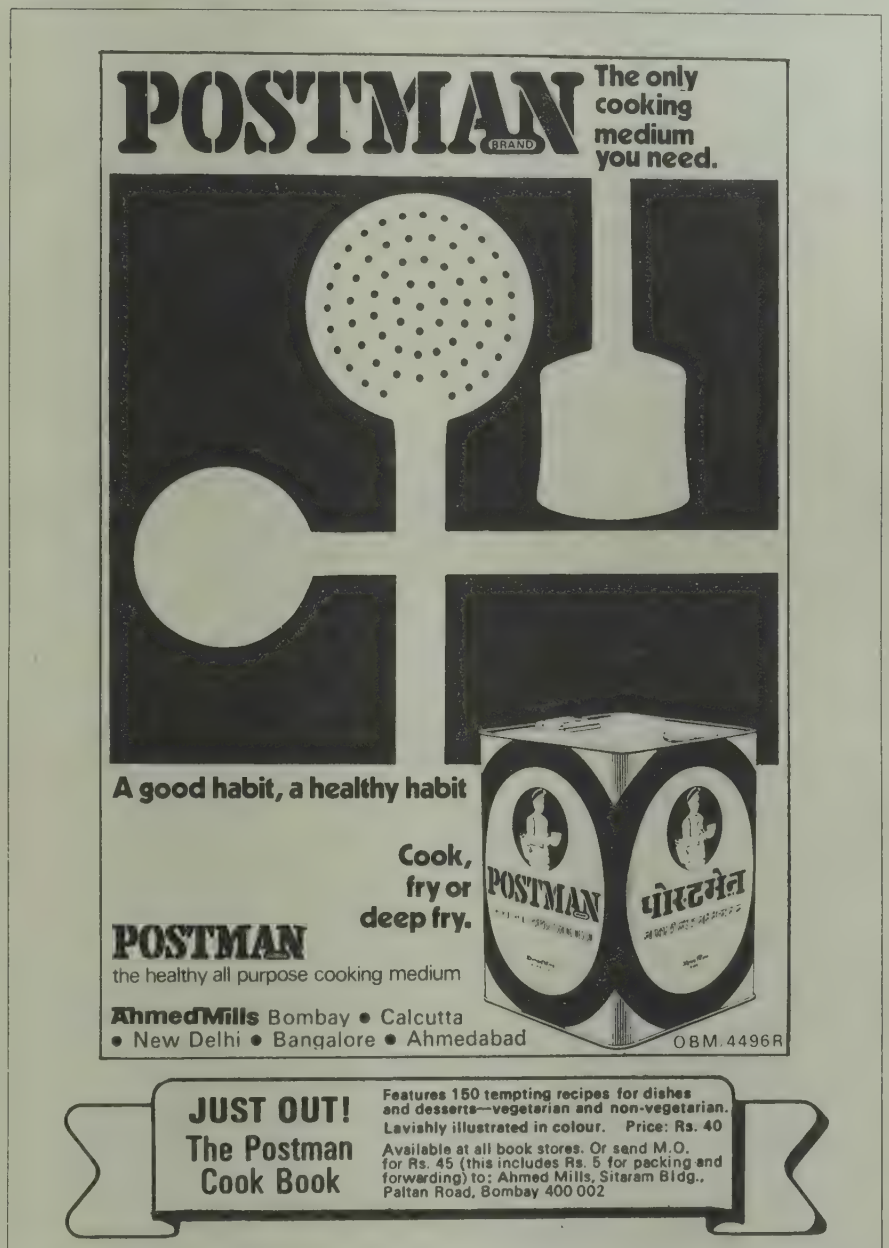
But, the brutes! In the recess they had only teased him all the more saying that it was the teacher's partiality that had made her say what she did. He had been on the verge of crying at seeing his essay so unjustly scorned, but had restrained himself, realizing that goaded by success in needling him into tears, they would only intensify their teasing. Besides, how could he expect them to appreciate a good piece of writing? Only a creative person like him could appreciate another's excellence. And nobody would call these louts creative. When they were not playing or eating, they were sure to be swotting away for the exams! And these crams invariably topped the class.

That was the reason he gave for his low rank in class. He was too intelligent to cram like them. But his mother quietly kept on insisting that he should show some improvement in his studies, making it clear that she did not have much faith in his argument that his intelligence came in the way of securing good marks.

The frown that had creased his brow dissolved into a twitching smile as he thought of his mother's possible reaction to the teacher's remarks today. Wait till he told her that he had not been boasting when he had called himself creative! Had not the teacher herself admitted today he was? Of course she would dismiss it as insignificant and scold him for not spending enough time with his school books. But, he thought, she would be perhaps doing it not because she was unaware of his gift but only to prevent him from neglecting his studies in his pride.

He savoured the words of praise again in his mind: "creative mind," "good command over English." Yes, those were the gifts that would lift him above the rest. All his classmates would become dreary office workers, off to work at nine, back home by five — doing dull, routine work for eight dull hours.

Not he! Creativity should never be tied down to monotony. He would become a full-time writer, following no man's dictates, lord and master of his own self. And the combination of creativity and expressive language would soon prove itself by catapulting his books to the best selling lists and himself to eternal fame.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His books would not be the cheap commercial stuff meant only to amass lucre. They would be invested with a compelling and captivating content which would make them classics for all time. He would be talked about with the same respect as Joseph Conrad, Galsworthy, Zola Tolstoy and other giants of literature.

Then he would write his masterpiece. No sooner it was released, it would be acclaimed as one of the greatest books of all time. Like Tagore for his "Gitanjali", he too would be awarded the Nobel prize for his . . . what would be the title of his book? Oh, well, that could wait.

Money would roll in from his writings and he would no longer have to be careful about spending. His family could then shift out of the dilapidated tenement in the overcrowded part of the city to a beautiful bungalow in the suburbs. His mother and father could relax, the burden of earning the upkeep of the family and doing the heavy household work removed from their aged shoulders. They would enjoy every luxury. No longer would his parents rush off to work every morning and at the end of the month count the money carefully to make it last.

A sudden gust of wind blew the sheet of paper out of his loose clutch. It rose and floated away gently. Vipin ran after it, following its gyrations in utter panic. Then it started descending slowly and came to rest in the middle of the road a hundred yards ahead of him. He rushed at it, his chest heaving, his face covered with perspiration at the unwanted exercise. There it was, and he lunged at it, to keep safe this first intimation of his immortality.

No sooner had his pudgy fingers closed round the paper, it was jerked out again, but this time by the powerful impact of the lorry hitting his flesh. He fell, his hands clutching his shattered hip.

He saw the paper cheerfully floating away again and then vanish. Then dark, sweet oblivion overcame him, a pleasant consoling blackness. He felt drowsy and an agreeable glow began to steal over his heart. He felt a sense of delirious ease and serenity in a mind that had all his life been racked and weary. And deep in a heart that had been tormented there was an assurance of comfort, of a battle won.

The storm that had buffeted him all his life was over. He had entered a haven of calm waters. Nobody to poke fun at him, nobody to tease him, just an all-pervading peace.

No, not all pervading. Some disturbing thoughts kept nagging him — the paper, the Nobel prize, money, Daddy... Mummy, Daddy, Mummy, Mumm...

The doctor came and pronounced him dead.

The paper drifted away merrily, caught in the air currents. Far away from the scene of tragedy, the wind relented and the paper flopped down in an empty courtyard.

When the children came out to play in the evening, they found it resting on a few blades of grass — a sheet filled with unreadable squiggles. They proceeded to make a plane out of it. It flew well and they occupied themselves trying to see who would catch it first as it descended.

One boy hurtled the plane at the sky with all his might. It rose high and glided gracefully through the air. Then it stopped, fluttered, and floated again before falling into the pile of burning leaves in one corner of the courtyard.

The flames licked greedily at the paper. One tip curled up, slowly blackening, and then it burst into a spurt of flame. It spread rapidly, consuming the sheet with a ravenous appetite. The children looked on in helpless dismay.

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500 grams potatoes; 4 corn cobs; ½ cup vermicelli, crushed; ½ bunch coriander leaves, chopped; ¼ cup coconut, grated; 1½ tbsps. ginger-chilli paste; 2 small lemons; 4 tbsps. gram flour; sugar and salt to taste; oil for deep frying.

Remove the corn from the cobs and boil in salted water till tender. Add grated coconut, coriander leaves, ginger-chilli paste, sugar and salt to taste. Add juice of one lemon and mix well. Divide equally into ten portions.

1. Boil and mash the potatoes. Add salt, juice of one lemon, little ginger-chilli paste and gram flour. Mix well to form a soft dough. Divide into ten balls.

2. Smear oil on your finger tips. Make a flat puri out of one potato ball.

3. Place one portion of the corn mixture in the centre and close the opening giving an oval shape.

4. Roll into the crushed vermicelli and deep fry in oil till golden brown. Remove on to a brown paper. Similarly prepare the other balls. Serve hot with chutney or tomato ketchup.

1

2

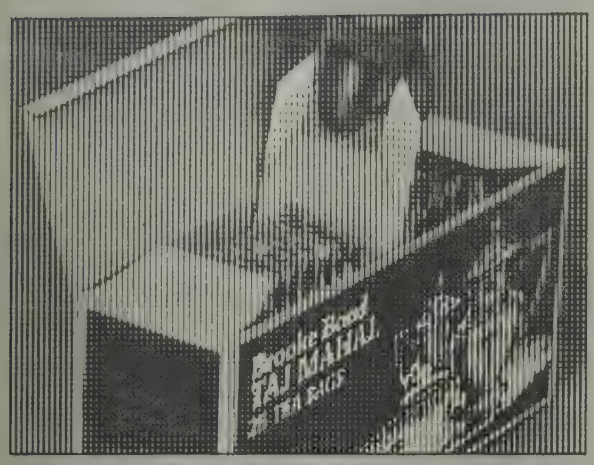
3

4

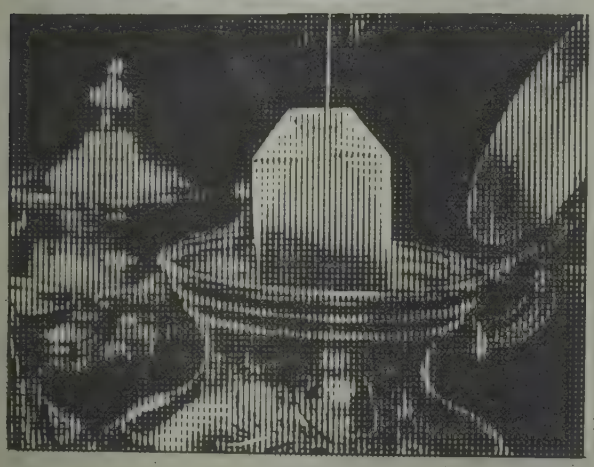
Photographs : Taiyeb Badshah

Brooke Bond presents

a great new way to good tea



just pick...



and dip.

Mmm!

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PEOPLE KNOWN AND

To some it may seem a contradiction in terms, but many hardlining Marxists also practise their religions. Many Italian Communists are practising Roman Catholics, and it is a familiar sight every Sunday, when Italy's number one Marxist leader, **Enrico Berlinguer,** escorts his wife to church, although he does not go in himself. **Babrak Karmal,** strongman of Afghanistan and one of Moscow's most loyal adherents, actively participates in Islamic rites. Recently, during celebrations, he sat cross-legged

on the ground along with other leading lights of Kabul's Communist regime. But of course this could also be a ploy to woo the militant Muslims who have so far resisted Moscow's interference in their internal affairs. Another Marxist who is also a practising Roman Catholic is newly-independent Zimbabwe's **Mugabe.** And his President (who holds a largely decorative post), long time rival **Canaan Banana,** goes one better. An eccentric Methodist priest, he concocted his own prayers to aid black Rhodesian militants during the seven-year civil war, part of which was: "Lord, forgive us our docility"!

* * *

According to diehard Carnatic music pundits, all the "ragas" and all the "talas" have been invented, perfected and written down by our ancestors thousands of years ago, who approached the whole exercise with mathematical precision and thought of every combination and permutation possible. The world-famous and controversial vocalist **Dr. Balamurali Krishna,** however, has put in a claim that he has created a new tala, called Navamukhi. Balamurali got into hot water a few years ago when he claimed that he had invented a new raga. Now the fight should begin again between the erudite purists and the not-so-pure.

* * *

Five-star hotels in Bombay have tried everything under the sun to woo their clientele. First, it was international food festivals serving exotic fare. Then it was desi food from different States in India serving rustic Kutchi or royal Palanpur food. The latest craze is to have a cultural evening featuring a romantic ghazal singer. Flowers and incense create that oh-so-Indian atmosphere, while guests recline on durries and mattresses on the floor. Centaur featured **Nina and Rajendra Mehta** and Searock had **Chitra** and **Jagjit Singh.** At Poonam International, it was **Mehdi Hassan.** If reports are to be believed, the famous Pakistani singer, appalled that the guests were more interested in the food than in his music, threatened to walk out in disgust. At the Searock, Jagjit Singh publicly chided the management for allowing drinks to be served while he was singing, and the audience for getting up and walking around. But what do these singers expect? If they are willing to settle for a large sum of money and perform in a hotel, they must also swallow the unpalatable fact that

people are more interested in the food. After all, each guest pays something like Rs. 150 per head to attend one of these evenings, and to get his money's worth, guzzling becomes as important as ghazal-ing!

* * *

There are those who are addicted to **Amita Malik's** ascerbic column on radio and TV in the Times of India. Others remember her better by her personalised it-happened-to-me variety of middles in various national dailies. But collecting feathers in her cap is a routine affair for Ms.

Malik. She has now been invited to serve on the international jury at the Cracow Film Festival this June. Ms. Malik is the only Asian so far to receive this invitation to one of the most prestigious film festivals in the world.

A "film woman" through and through, Ms. Malik is an inveterate festival goer.

Apart from commenting on films and TV, Amita visited Bangladesh soon after its liberation and wrote a remarkable book, "The Year of the Vulture".

* * *

Famous Carnatic musician, **Palghat Mani Iyer,** has announced his retirement. A genius on the "mridangam", Mani Iyer has been a colossus of the Carnatic music scene. An unflinching conservative, he is the only man to date who, as an accompanist, was paid a token one rupee more than the star of the evening, the singer. He bitterly opposed any deviation from traditional methods and staunchly refused to permit microphones at his concerts and to accompany women vocalists. The one exception he made to the latter rule was for **D. K. Pattamal** when she became a relative of his through a marriage in the family. Although a mridangam player is an accompanist to the vocalist and necessarily has to take a back seat, Palghat Mani was an exception, for there have been few people in the history of Carnatic music to match his perfection. The only people who can now listen to this genius are his students at the Rishi Valley school.

UNKNOWN

A virile "young" man of 50 (whose identity has been kept secret) has sent an SOS to Air-India and, uncharacteristically, the airline has taken his plea seriously, and published it in their house magazine. He wants to marry, "any air-hostess who is about to leave you for a married life. I trust a beautiful, cultured and sweet girl from your organisation can marry an introvert intellectual such as me." His specifications: She should be 5' 6" tall, God-fearing, a vegetarian and a non-Brahmin! And about himself, he says he is a "silent, peaceful, non-smoking honest man. I sing bhajans and lead a pure life". Will any houri heed his plea?

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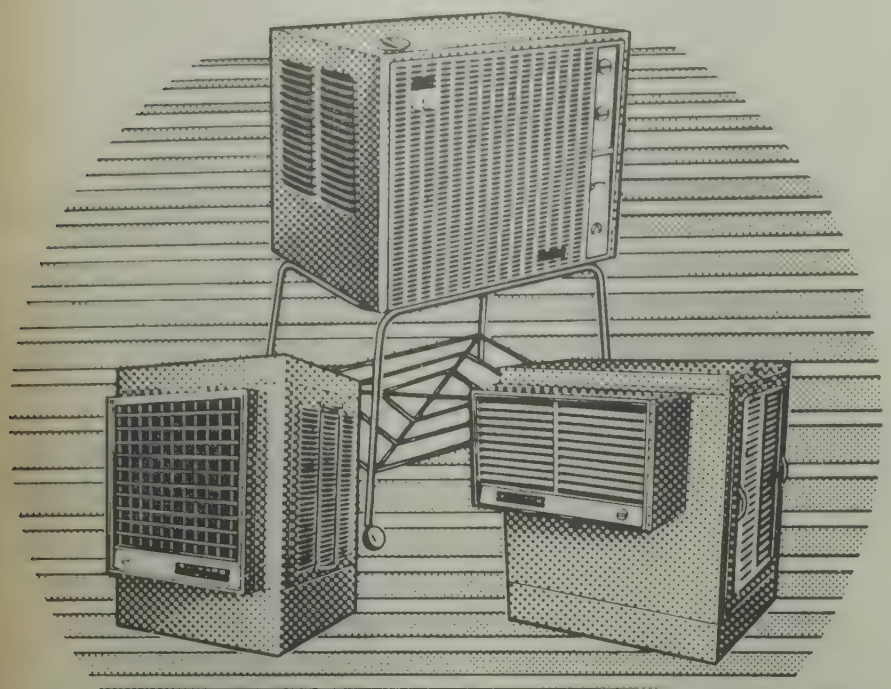

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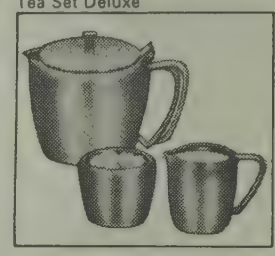

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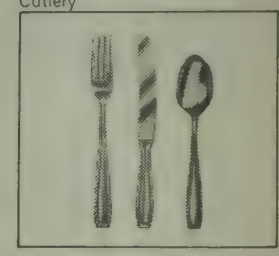

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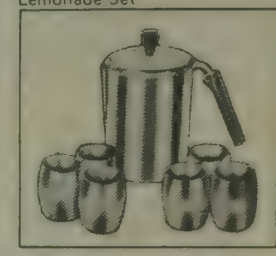

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THE ARTLESS ART OF REPARTEE

P. S. Sharma

Repartee is a witty and smart reply on the spur of the moment. It is a kind of lightning retort and has a clinching finality about it. It leaves the recipient stunned and speechless.

Lady Astor was the non-plussed recipient of a typical Churchillian repartee at the end of an acrimonious exchange. The lady shouted at the great parliamentarian, "If the Right Honourable gentleman were my husband, I'd put arsenic in his coffee."

To which Churchill replied, "If the Honourable lady were my wife, I would drink it!"

Edmund Waller had fallen in love with Dorothy Sidney, daughter of the Earl of Leicester. Waller wrote poems in praise of her beauty, but she chose to marry another man to become Lady Sunderland. Waller lived to converse with the lady when she was very old.

An irate Lady Astor to Winston Churchill at the end of an acrimonious exchange: "If the Rt. Hon. gentleman were my husband I'd put arsenic in his coffee."

"If the Hon. Lady were my wife," Churchill replied, "I would drink it."

She asked him in raillery, "When, Mr. Waller, will you write such verses upon me again?" Not to be outdone, Waller replied, "Oh, Madam, when your ladyship is as young again."

Dryden does not seem to have enjoyed much conjugal bliss with Lady Elizabeth whom, if we are to believe the lampoons of the time, he was compelled by one of her brothers to marry. Feeling herself neglected by the bard who busied himself with his books, she exclaimed, "Lord, Mr. Dryden, how can you always be poring over those musty books? I wish I were a book, and then I should have more of your company."

"Pray, my dear," replied the poet, "if you do become a book let it be an almanack, for then I should change you every year."

At one of the parties hosted by Admiral Walsingham, where, among the distinguished gathering, Dr. Johnson was also present, a dashing young officer determined to attack the old bear of whom all seemed to be in such awe. There was a good dinner and during that important time Johnson was deaf to all his tentative impertinence. However, after some rounds of wine had passed rather freely, the young man ventured out a little further than discretion warranted: "Now, Dr. Johnson, do not look so glum," he said, "but be a little gay and lively like others. What would you give, old gentleman, to be as young and sprightly as I am?"

"Why, Sir," said Johnson, "I think I would almost be content to be as foolish."

Monboddo and Lord Kames were at daggers drawn and had a sovereign contempt for each other's studies and works. Soon after Lord Kames' book, "The Elements of Criticism," was published, he happened to meet Monboddo, then at the Bar, on the street. "Well," his Lordship casually inquired, "have you read my latest book?"

"I have not, my Lord," quipped Monboddo. "You write a great deal faster than I am able to read."

Lord Sandwich once dined in Samuel Foote's company. In an unguarded moment, after the glass had gone profusely round, Lord Sandwich said, "Foote, I have often wondered what catastrophe would bring you to your end; but I think you must either die of the pox, or the halter."

"My Lord," reported Foote instantaneously, "that will depend upon one of two contingencies — whether I embrace your lordship's mistress, or your lordship's principles."

On being advised by Sir James Griggs to "face ugly facts", S. Satyamurthi retorted, "That is what I have been doing, day after day, sitting here."

The redoubtable Richard Porson was once walking with a Trinitarian friend, and they had been speaking of Trinity. Just then, a buggy with three men inside came by. "There," said the Trinitarian, "is an illustration of the Trinity."

"No," Porson replied, "you must show me one man in three buggies."

Sir Lewis Morris, moaning about the studied neglect of his claim to the laureateship: "It is a complete conspiracy of silence against me— a conspiracy of silence! What ought I to do, Oscar?" "Join it," said Oscar Wilde.

One evening Coleridge had talked about everything, Moses downwards, with Charles Lamb as a listener. At last he came to his own doings at Shrewsbury. "At Shrewsbury, I was accustomed to preach. I believe, Lamb, that you have heard me preach?"

The bored and fatigued Lamb quickly retorted, "I, I, never heard you do anything else."

Douglas Jerrold was a devastating master of the art of repartee. He would instinctively perceive the germ of a retort before you had well begun to form your sentence and would fling it in your face the instant you had done speaking. Once the publisher of "Bentley's Miscellany" said to him, "I had some doubts about the name I should give the magazine; I thought at one time of calling it 'The Wits' Miscellany.'"

"Well," quick came Jerrold's thunderbolt, "but you needn't have gone to the other extreme."

Oscar Wilde's powers of spontaneous wit are well known. Once, Sir Lewis Morris complained about, as he thought, the studied neglect of his claims to laureateship after Tennyson's death. Said Morris, "It is a complete conspiracy of silence against me — a conspiracy of silence! What ought I to do, Oscar?"

"Join it," came the reply.

Soon after the death of the well known composer, someone who did not keep pace with the news of the day, asked Mr. Gilbert, "What is the maestro doing?"

"He is doing nothing," replied Gilbert.

"Surely, he is composing," persisted the questioner.

"On the contrary," came the stunning reply, "he is decomposing."

Nearer home Sri Prakasa had an amiable but ready wit. But once his retort verged on the cruel. During the British days, a patriotic Anglo-Indian Member once inquired, "Why are the British soldiers being kept in India?"

"Well," Mr. Sri Prakasa could not refrain from quipping, "only to give us more Anglo-Indians."

The late S. Satyamurthi was one of the readiest wits in India. On being advised by Sir James Griggs to "face ugly facts," Satyamurthi retorted, "That is what I have been doing, day after day, sitting here."

"Lord, Mr. Dryden," said his somewhat neglected wife, "how can you always be poring over musty books? I wish I were a book, and then I should have more of your company."

"Pray my dear," replied the poet, "if you do become a book let it be an almanack, for then I should change you every year."

Sardar Patel once advised Mahatma Gandhi not to take too much of tamarind, adding, "It will weaken your bones."

The Mahatma could not accept this criticism of his dietary fads. "But Mahadev Desai takes it every day. It has done him no harm."

"Do you think," quipped the irrepressible Sardar, "that tamarind stands any chance of percolating down to his bones?"

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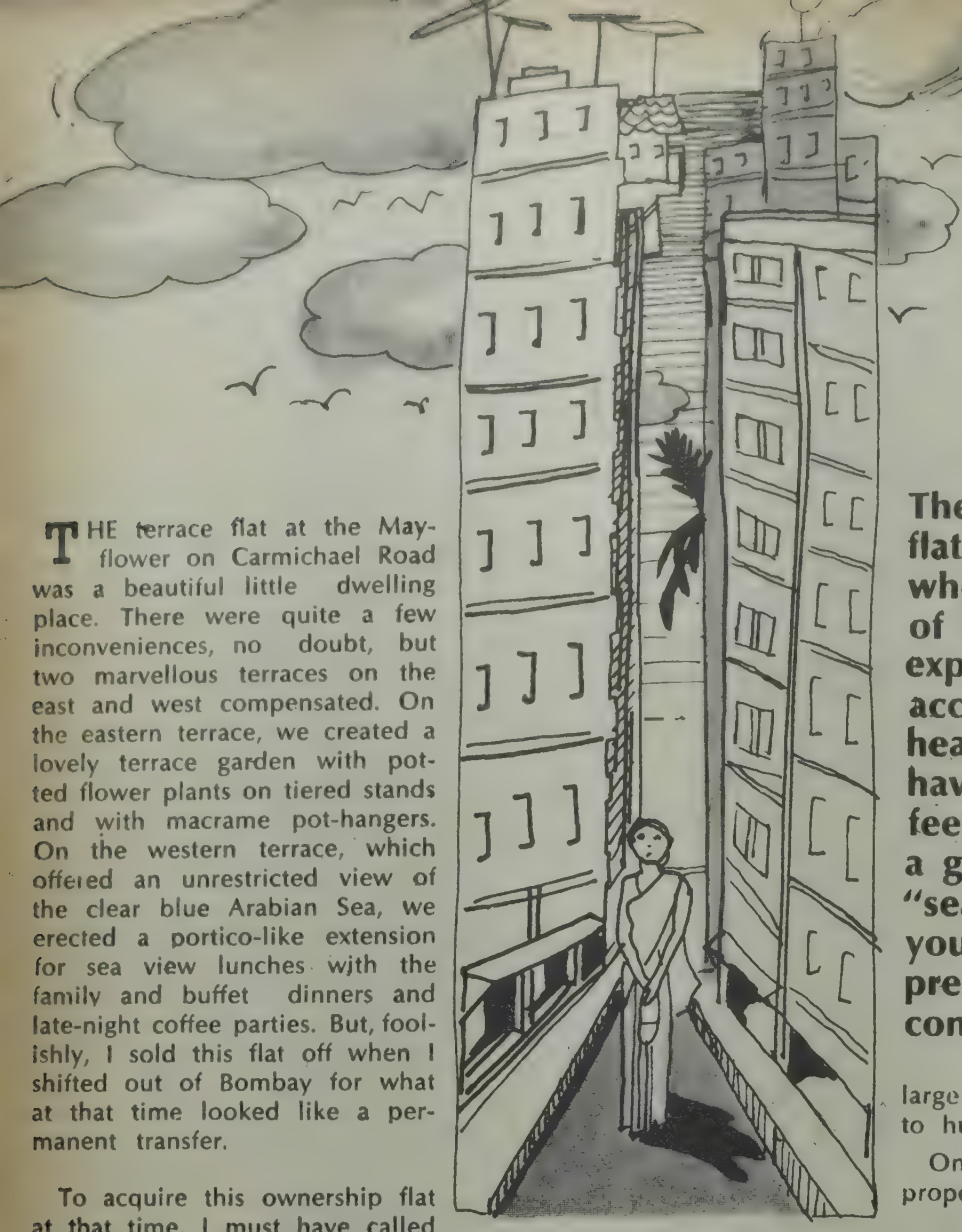


THE GREAT SEARCH

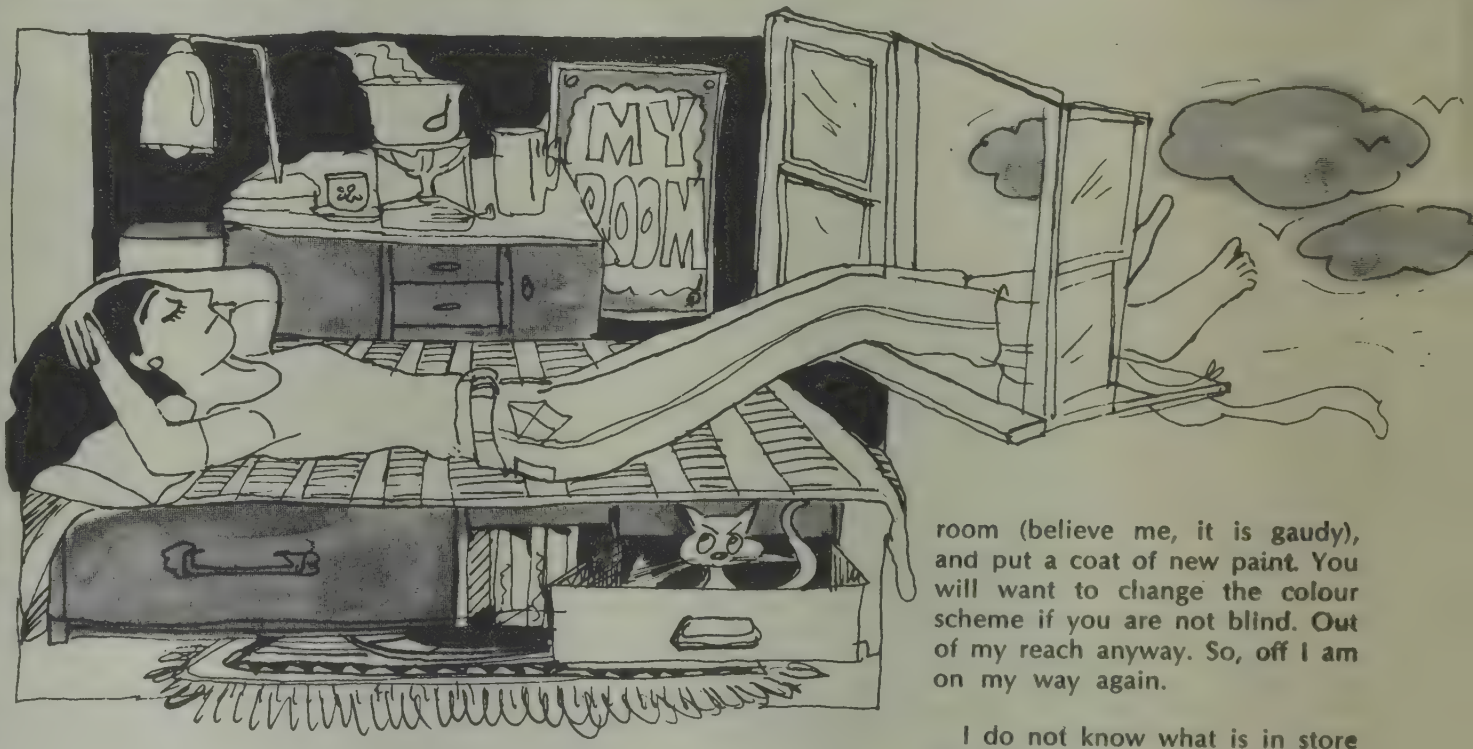
Indrakant Patel

The nightmare of flat hunting in Bombay, where the bedroom of an atrociously expensive flat may accommodate your head, but then you'd have to leave your feet outside, and to get a glimpse of the "sea view" advertised, you'd have to be a pretty good contortionist!

THE terrace flat at the Mayflower on Carmichael Road was a beautiful little dwelling place. There were quite a few inconveniences, no doubt, but two marvellous terraces on the east and west compensated. On the eastern terrace, we created a lovely terrace garden with potted flower plants on tiered stands and with macrame pot-hangers. On the western terrace, which offered an unrestricted view of the clear blue Arabian Sea, we erected a portico-like extension for sea view lunches with the family and buffet dinners and late-night coffee parties. But, foolishly, I sold this flat off when I shifted out of Bombay for what at that time looked like a permanent transfer.

To acquire this ownership flat at that time, I must have called on at least 200 landlords and brokers, inspected over 500 premises, most of which turned out to be bogus offers. The brokers earned their living. I did the spending, walking, and climbing. Frustration all the way.

Now, after 20 years, I am in search of a flat again. I am scared stiff. I clearly recollect the nightmares I had finding the flat earlier. I scan every newspaper I can lay my hands upon for advertisements of flats on rent or for sale. Wonderful pieces of literature, these ads. They promise you paradise, but expect the moon from you. And what you get in the end is only toil and tears. You are on the streets. To view the sea from flats advertised as "with sea view", you have to climb down three staircases to the ground floor and walk a furlong to the sea or, if you are a little luckier, you can twist your body sideways, balancing it on the rail of the small balcony, and get a glimpse of a few square inches of the distant sea through the window of the adjoining building. Provided, of course, the neighbour has left his window open.



The bedrooms are large enough for a small enough bed, but not for an adult body. You have a choice. You can keep your head inside the room either by folding your legs or letting them jut out of the window on the opposite wall. Of course, there is a bonus feature to these small bedrooms if you are recently married — they are just large enough for the two of you to huddle together passionately.

One flat offered was a sharing proposition. In this three-room flat with two small balconies, five Sardarji families were already living, with cloth curtains to afford them privacy. The bath and toilet could not be partitioned, but then there was no problem of privacy there anyway. Another was a flat-sharing proposition with an alluring lady "beautician". Even as I was being conducted on an inspection tour of this flat, some film personalities and rich "sethias" called on her for "appointments". I was scared. I did not care even to complete the inspection tour, excused myself, and departed in haste.

In utter disgust, I decided to try and get back the ownership flat I had foolishly sold off years ago. Nice little terrace flat on Carmichael Road. I had bought it damn cheap in those days and then sold it off for a handsome profit when I migrated out of Bombay. But by current standards, I had sold it for a song, as it were. The buyer had bargained hard with me, pointing out real as well as imaginary drawbacks in it to beat down the price. Now it was his turn to bargain hard with me, claiming plus points for the very oddities he had pointed out to beat down his purchase price at that time.

How much does he want? Double? Quadruple? No, not even five times over. He is asking for... guess what? He is asking, hold your breath, ten times the price he had paid to me! Of course, he has spent some money, he has modified the flat, made five smaller rooms in place of the three old large ones, put up a false ceiling in the sitting room (believe me, it is gaudy), and put a coat of new paint. You will want to change the colour scheme if you are not blind. Out of my reach anyway. So, off I am on my way again.

I do not know what is in store for me. A friend even suggests that I give up my present job and take up one that offers free accommodation with it. That is, if I can land one like that. And that would be good only as long as I keep the job. If I lose that or retire, I lose the flat, too. Not a very pleasant prospect, is it?

The Great Search continues. The Spirit of the Explorer moves me on and on...

THE OLD TRUNK IN THE ATTIC

Ariba Ali Shah

It was a miserable day. Since early morning, it had been raining cats and dogs, and it appeared it would never stop. Luckily, it was a holiday. But the three of us — Hena, Rubina and myself — were soon tired of being kept indoors. No wonder tempers were running short, and we felt that we had been cheated out of the picnic promised us.

We really did give a trying time to poor Mummy! It was after lunch and three quarrels later, that Mummy had the brilliant idea, which kept us busy and out of her way.

"Why don't you three tidy that old trunk in the attic?" she suggested, consoling Hena who was still crying from the slap which Rubina had given her. Being the eldest, I had kept aloof, watching the two "kids" squabbling. Dad was away, or he'd have done something pretty drastic.

Her suggestion brightened us up considerably. The attic! Why, it was the most exciting place in the world! Our house had been built by our great-grandfather and had been the home of three generations. All sorts of things had accumulated in the attic and it was very crowded, though recently Mummy had been getting rid of quite a few things.

But it was really surprising how many of them found their way back into the trunks from the doorstep! And once Mummy had mentioned something about cleaning out a very large trunk. Said to be over a hundred years old (and it really looked that old), in which she had kept all the old things that belonged to us when we were kids.

In a jiffy, we changed into old jeans and tied Dad's handkerchiefs around our heads. Alas! There were only two to be found; and Hena was left without one. But for once, Hena didn't howl the place down! She grabbed a towel and wound it round her head — looking quite peculiar. Giggling, the three of us clattered up the stairs to the attic.

I was the last to go and I think I heard Mummy say, "Good riddance!"

Rubina switched on the light and we spied the trunk in a corner under a pile of old magazines neatly tied in bundles.

BANG! THUD!. The easiest way to clear the magazines off the trunk was to push them away. They landed heavily on the floor, or, rather the ceiling of the upper floor.

"Shhh! Rubina," I hissed. "**Do** throw them quietly!"

Rubina snorted, then sneezed as she breathed in some dust. "How can I throw things quietly?" she asked smugly.

I didn't bother to reply. We finally cleared away the magazines. Hena swept the dust off the lid. The three of us stood around the trunk admiring it.

It was a very big, heavy, metal trunk, painted in black, though some patches appeared here and there where the paint had worn off. The metal bands around it and on the corners were beautifully studded with brass nails, though they appeared quite tarnished, and so were the two huge clasps.

The single electric bulb did not give out sufficient light, and the three of us crowding around it cast dark shadows on it. We decided to pull it to the centre of the attic where there was more light.

But easier said than done. It was a heavy job, and with many a puff and pant and push and pull we finally dragged it where there was enough light. Another couple of minutes and the stubborn old clasps finally yielded. Hena gallantly lifted the heavy lid, and barely missed banging her head in the process.

"We'll pile everything on the floor first," I said, taking charge. "Then we'll put back the things which we want. The rest can be thrown away."

"Right, sis," readily agreed Hena and Rubina.

Three eager pairs of hands dived into the trunk and one armful after another of clothes, books, toys, etc. tumbled on to the floor.

"Atishoo!"

"Aaachoo!"

We sneezed and rubbed our noses as the fine dust and strong smell of moth balls swept up from the box.

At last, the trunk stood quite empty and we sat crosslegged on the dusty floor surrounded by what the elders would have called rubbish.

Sorting out the clothes was fun and brought back old memories.

Continued on page 46

MILK

Pramila Lal

Milk is a nourishing food, being an important source of protein. When a recipe calls for milk, it means pasteurized whole milk unless otherwise specified. It contains water, fat, protein, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins. Whole milk is fresh, fluid milk containing 4 per cent of butter fat. This fat is the cream that forms on top when boiled. Homogenised milk contains the same percentage of fat as the whole milk. It gets no cream formation on top as, during its preparation, the fat is broken up so finely that it is uniformly dispersed. It produces different textures in cooking and thickens sauces. Skim milk contains all the protein and mineral value of whole milk, but half of its caloric value is reduced as the fat is removed. Evaporated or condensed milk is the whole milk, reduced to half its moisture content and canned. Dry milk powder is pasteurized milk particles, air dried to eliminate the moisture content. It enriches cakes, puddings and custards.

Sour milk is whole or skim which is allowed to sour naturally. This can substitute buttermilk. Cream — the fatty part of whole milk–is whipped into delicious sweet preparations or used as topping for desserts.

STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM

2 cups strawberries, crushed
1 tbsp. castor sugar
1 cup evaporated milk
1 cup homogenised milk
1 tsp. lemon juice
6 tbsps. sugar
1 egg, separated
1 tbsp. cornstarch
⅛ tsp. salt
1 tsp. vanilla essence

Mix the lemon juice with the evaporated milk and pour into a tray to chill. Heat the milk in top of double boiler. Combine the cornstarch, four tablespoons sugar, beated egg yolk and salt. Add to hot milk. Cook over hot water, stirring constantly. When the mixture begins to thicken, remove from fire. When cool, add the vanilla essence. Beat the egg white stiff and fold into the mixture. Whip the chilled evaporated milk and fold into the mix-

Photograph : Tanvir Badshah

ture. Sprinkle the castor sugar over the strawberries and mix. Add the strawberries to the mixture. Pour into ice trays and freeze until set.

CUCUMBER SAUCE

1 cup skim milk
1¼ tbsps. flour
1 tbsp. fresh dill, minced (suva bhaji)
Salt to taste
1 cup cucumber, grated
1 green chilli, finely chopped or minced

Put the milk in the top of a double boiler, or substitute, by placing a small pan over a larger pan of hot water. Sprinkle flour, dill and salt over the surface and beat with a rotary beater till just blended. Stir in cucumber and chilli, and cook over hot water, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens. Use as a spreading over halved boiled eggs, grilled fish or steamed vegetables.

MALPURA

1 cup skim milk powder
¾ cup milk
4 tbsps. whole wheat flour
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp. aniseed
1 tbsp. raisins
1½ cups sugar
1½ cups water
A pinch of salt
¾ cup ghee

Make a batter with the skim milk powder, milk, flour and egg. Stir in raisins and aniseed. Prepare a syrup by stirring the sugar and water in a pan. Boil for five minutes. Keep warm. Meanwhile heat the ghee in a kerahi and drop in a tablespoon of batter at a time, fry till brown on one side, turn over and brown the other side. Drain out and put each malpura in the syrup to soak for ten minutes. Remove and keep in a dish.

DHANIA MURGH

1 medium chicken
1 pint curd or yoghourt
240 grams khova (solidified milk)
6 cloves garlic
1½" piece ginger
60 grams almonds (optional)
60 grams sultanas
1 tsp. turmeric powder
20 green chillis
2 bunches coriander leaves
1 pint coconut milk extract
4 tbsps. ghee
Salt to taste

Joint the chicken. Grind ginger and garlic together and smear the chicken pieces with the paste. Heat ghee and fry chicken pieces till nicely browned.

Blend curd and khoya together to a smooth paste. Add turmeric and salt and mix well. Blanch almonds and slice them. Reheat ghee and fry the almonds and sultanas, add curd mixture and chicken and cook till only a little gravy is left. Add the slit green chillis and cook till dry. Add coriander leaves and coconut milk, bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer gently without stirring till chicken is tender and ghee floats to the top. Serve with boiled rice, chappatis or any other bread

WALNUT MARZIPANS

500 grams icing sugar
200 grams walnuts, shelled, halved
½ tin condensed milk
Dash of vanilla essence
½ cup soft butter

Put the icing sugar and butter into a bowl and rub together gently with the finger tips. Add the condensed milk and knead the mixture into a stiff dough. Add the essence and knead again. Grease the hands and roll small balls from the dough about one inch in diameter. Grease a marble top table or a tray and place the marzipan balls. Press a walnut half into each ball.

MAI VHALLAN

1 large chicken
2 pints milk
2 pints creamy top of the milk, or single cream
6 cloves garlic
6 green chillis
1 piece ginger
5 onions
240 grams raisins
4 eggs
1 tsp. butter
500 grams ghee
Salt to taste

Joint the chicken. Grind the chillis, garlic and ginger to a paste. Heat a little ghee in a saucepan and fry one sliced onion until golden brown. Add the chicken pieces, the ground paste, more ghee and salt. When the chicken turns light brown, add about two and a half pints water and let simmer until the chicken is tender and a little gravy remains. Slice the remaining onions. Fry the raisins and onions together, and set aside.

Shred the chicken. Cook the shredded chicken in the milk on a medium heat until the milk is reduced to half its original volume. Butter a baking-dish and into this pour the remaining chicken gravy. Spread a layer of the milk-cooked chicken, then a layer of the fried onion mixture, then a layer of cream. Repeat these layers and finally break the eggs on top of the last layer. Bake until the eggs are well set.

CORN MUFFINS

1 cup yellow corn meal
1 cup skim milk or whole milk
¼ cup sugar
½ tbsp. salt
1 cup flour
1 egg, well beaten
4 tsps. baking powder
¼ cup melted butter

Mix the corn meal, sugar, salt, flour and baking powder and sift togther. Combine egg, milk and shortening. Slowly add to the dry ingredients, beating till smooth. Bake in greased muffin tins at 425°F. for twenty minutes.

COOKERY QUEEN

ROSE MEHTA, Secunderabad.

Mrs. Mehta wins Rs. 100 for this month's best recipe plus a non-stick coated Fry Pan from Trupti Industries and a gift hamper from Corn Products, Bombay.

MANGO FRITTERS IN SWEET-SOUR SAUCE

FOR THE FRITTERS :

3 ripe but firm mangoes, peeled and diced
100 grams flour
2 eggs, separated
½ cup water
½ cup milk
Oil for frying
A pinch each baking powder, salt and pepper
2 tsps. refined oil

FOR THE SAUCE :

4 mangoes, peeled, and pureed
1 raw mango, grated
1-2 capsicums, cut in strips
2 tbsps. cornflour
1 onion, grated
2-3 tbsps. salad oil
2 cups stock (optional)
2 cups water
1 tbsp. honey
3 tbsps. vinegar
½ tsp. cardamom powder (optional)
½ tsp. ginger powder
Salt to taste

Blend together the flour, milk, egg yolks, oil, baking powder, salt and pepper. Add water gradually with the stiffly whisked egg whites. Keep aside for ten minutes. Coat the mango bits with this batter and deep fry in oil to golden brown. Drain and keep aside.

FOR THE SAUCE :

Fry the grated onion and capsicum in oil until transluscent. Stir in the cornflour. Gradually blend in the stock or water. Cook gently on a low heat, stirring from time to time until a thick sauce is formed. At this stage add the mango pulp, grated mango, vinegar, honey, ginger and salt. Before serving, fold in the fried mango fritters.

Serve with fried noodles.

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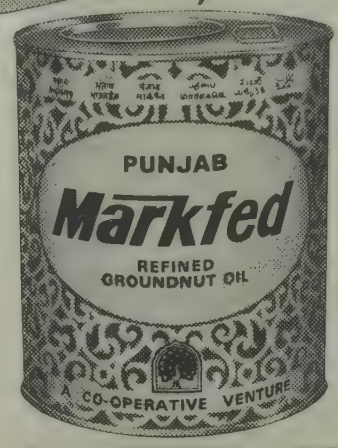

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RECIPES FROM OUR READERS

Mrs. V. Akalkotkar, Ahmedabad.

MANGO HALWA

1 cup wheat
1 cup ripe mango juice
1 tbsp. ghee
1½ cup sugar
2 cardamoms, powdered
10-12 cashewnuts, chopped

Soak the wheat in water for one day. On the second day, change the water and soak once again. On the third day wash well and grind in a mixer. Remove. Add three cups of water and extract wheat milk. Leave the extracted milk aside for three to four hours undisturbed. Thick milk will settle down and you will see a thin layer of water on top. Discard this layer of water without disturbing the lower layer.

A flat plate or pan is greased with ghee (small quantity). Keep aside. Pour the thick milk in a dekchi. To this add sugar, mango juice, cardamom powder and cashewnuts. Keep on fire, stir well. After five minutes, reduce the flame. Remove, press evenly on a greased thali. Cut into cubes and serve.

Mrs. Shanthy Pragalsingh, Madras.

MANGO CURD COCONUT JELLY

500 grams canned mangoes
2 cups cream
½ cup curd
½ cup thick coconut milk
1 tbsp. gelatine
3 tbsps. cold water
4 tbsps. sugar
50 grams walnuts, broken
50 grams preserved cherries
50 grams sweet biscuits

FOR THE JELLY :

10 grams china grass
2 tbsps. sugar
3 cups syrup from the canned mango
Few drops golden colour
½ tsp. vanilla essence

Prepare the jelly with syrup and the required quantity of water. Add china grass and sugar. Keep the pan on fire. Let it dissolve well. Remove and cool slightly. Add essence and colour. Divide the jelly into two parts. Pour one part in a pudding dish. Let it set. Mash half of the mango slices. Keep aside. Dissolve the gelatine in three tablespoons of cold water and keep aside. Put sugar and cream in a pan. Heat over low fire till the sugar dissolves. Beat in the coconut milk and the dissolved gelatine. Remove from fire. Add the mashed mango to the cream mixture. Blend well. Pour this over the set jelly. Let it set in the fridge. Warm the remaining half of the previous jelly slightly and pour over the cream mixture layer.

Crush the biscuits and spread over the jelly. Decorate the top with the remaining mango slices, chopped nuts and glazed cherries.

WEEKLY WINNER

MOLLY MARKOS, Kerala.

Mrs. Markos wins Rs. 50 for this week's best recipe plus a 9 cup Storefresh container from Trupti Industries, a gift hamper from Corn Products and P. Mittulaul Lalah and Sons, Madras.

MANGO MARVEL

1 raw papaya
½ cup sugar
½ tsp. ground ginger
Green edible colour
2 cups water

FOR THE FILLING :

3 cups fresh mango pulp
1 cup prepared jelly (yellow or orange colour)
½ cup sugar
1 cup dates or raisins, chopped

FOR THE MOCK CREAM:

1 cup milk
¾ tbsps. cornflour
2 tbsps. butter
2 tbsps. sugar, powdered
12 red cherries or
2 tbsps. tutti fruti
Vanilla essence

Peel, prick and cut the papaya into two, lengthwise. Boil both halves in two cups water, half cup sugar, half teaspoon ground ginger and colouring, until well cooked but firm. Drain, cool and leave aside. When the jelly is semi-set, beat till frothy in a mixer. Add mango pulp and sugar and continue beating for a second or two. Pour into the papaya halves and refrigerate till well set. Spread dates onto one half of the papaya. Carefully cover with other half and store in the fridge. Meanwhile; blend milk into cornflour. Cook gently until thick. Allow to cool. Cream butter, sugar and essence till fluffy and white. Beat into cornflour mixture, pour over the papaya unevenly. Place red cherries or tutti fruti in any pattern for decoration. Store in the refrigerator till serving time. Slice in rings and serve.

ANNOUNCEMENT
Monthly Cookery Queen Contest

All cookery contestants for the monthly Cookery Queen Contest have to send in their recipes, non-vegetarian or vegetarian, according to the subjects specified for each month. We give below subjects for the coming three months to enable you to send in your entries well in advance.

July, 1980
SNACKS FOR ELEVENSES

August, 1980
PASTA PREPARATIONS

September, 1980
PRESSURE COOKED DISHES

All entries for July should reach us latest by June 5, August entries by July 5, and September entries by August 5, 1980.

COOKERY CONTESTANTS!

Revised Contest Rules

1. Each recipe must be accompanied by this coupon.

2. The author of each selected entry will be informed in advance and requested to send a passport size photograph of herself to be published along with her recipe.

3. The recipe must be original and not copied from a cookery book, a magazine of any other published material The prize-winner shall have to sign a declaration to that effect before the announcemer is made and the prize awarded.

Address your entries to the Cookery Editor, EVE'S WEEKLY, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay—400 023.

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8 volumes of milk make 1 volume of cheese.
So much for nutrition.

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So much for taste.

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No matter how it's cooked.
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8 volumes of milk reduce to 1 volume of cheese.
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THE LITTLE WOMAN

by Don Tobin

I'M JUST DEVASTATED, MAE! I CAN'T STAND THE IDEA OF YOU MOVING AWAY!
BUT, EMILY-
YOU CAN'T GO - I WON'T LET YOU! I LOVE YOU TOO MUCH!
THAT'S JUST IT! WE'RE NOT GOING!
YOU'RE NOT MOVING?
NO - SAM DECIDED NOT TO TAKE THAT NEW JOB -
ISN'T IT WONDERFUL? WE WON'T BE SPLIT UP!
THAT'S WHY I TURNED DOWN THE JOB -
WE'LL STILL BE BEST FRIENDS!
?
OF ALL THE SELFISH MEN!
HUH?
7-1
FOR DAYS I'VE BEEN PLANNING THIS TERRIFIC FAREWELL PARTY FOR MAE, AND NOW YOU HAVE TOTALLY RUINED IT!
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THE LITTLE WOMAN

THAT'S A LAUGH!

"The play ended, happily," recently wrote a local critic. What a difference a comma can make!

* * *

There was a young man who was bitten
By twenty two cats and a kitten.
Sighed he, "It is clear,
That my finish is near.
No matter — I'll die like a Briton."

* * *

Women's faults are many— men have only two; everything they say and everything they do.

* * *

Johnny: "Mummy, Richard has broken my toy."

Mum: "How did he do that?"

Johnny: "I hit him over the head with it."

* * *

"Madam, your husband must have absolute rest."

"Well, Doctor, he won't listen to me..."

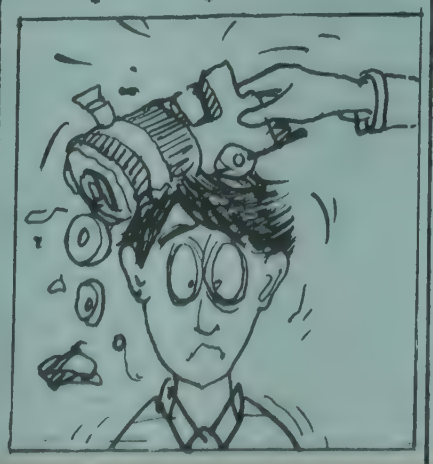
"A very good beginning madam, a very good beginning."

* * *

"The thing for you to do," said the doctor to the man with the frazzled nerves, "is to stop thinking of yourself— to bury yourself in your work."

"Gosh doc, I'm a grave digger."

* * *



"How do the Raos seem to like their little two-room kitchenette flat?"

"Oh, they have no room for complaint."

* * *

"Where did the car hit him?"

"At the junction of the dorsal and cervical vertebrae," replied the medical witness.

The burly foreman rose from his seat. "Man and boy, I've lived in these parts all my life and I've never heard of the place."

* * *

A man hurried into a quick lunch restaurant and said: "Give me a ham sandwich."

"Yes, sir," said the waiter. "Will you eat it here or take it with you?"

"Both," was the unexpected but obvious reply.

* * *

Diner: "Waiter, take this coffee away. It's like mud."

Waiter: "Well, it was ground only this morning."

* * *

Customer: "What's wrong with these eggs?"

Waitress: "Don't ask me. I only laid the table."

* * *

Diner: "Have you any wild duck?"

Waiter: "No sir. But we can get a tame one and irritate it for you."

* * *

"What is it about a dachshund that you don't care for?"

"They create a draft."

"How?"

"When they come into a room they always keep the door open so long."

* * *

Compiled by George Fegradoe

WOMEN IN FOCUS

MARIA LINA CLARA DE MENEZES

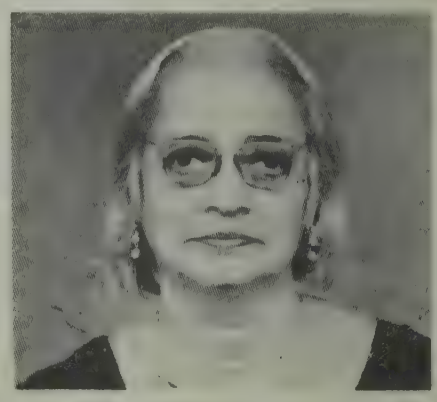
RECORDING AN OLD TRADITION

Cradle songs, the lovely little lullabys with which mothers in Goa have sung their babies to sleep, will soon be made available in book form. The Ministry of Education and Culture, New Delhi, has recently granted Maria Lina Clara de Menezes of Panaji, a 68-year-old former primary school teacher, a fellowship for research into and collection of these lullabys.

Clara is an apt choice for the compilation of Goan cradle songs. She remembers many such songs from the days of her childhood. She is a well-known poet with a book of verse, "Flores Silvestre" (Wild Flowers) to her credit. She has also contributed poems, plays, essays and features in Konkani, Portuguese and English to many journals, among them the prestigious 'O Heraldo' of Goa. Two of her poems were included in an anthology of Portuguese poetry published in Lisbon. A second book of verse awaits publication.

Goan cradle songs are improvised verses set to music. They are not longer than two or three stanzas. That these tuneful ditties have been passed from one generation to another over the years, is evidence of the charm they hold for children. Sometimes a scholar recognising the merit of the improvised verses, penned them with musical notation. The bulk of Konkani cradle songs are in the patois of Salcete, a district in Goa.

Clara related the origin of Goan cradle songs. "At the turn of the century," she said, "there was little by way of entertainment for children. Radios did not exist and girls were not sent to school where they could pick up music and letters. Parents saw no point in spending money on a daughter's schooling when they had to provide her with a dowry on her marriage.



"I was lucky in that I had enlightened parents. My father, a doctor in Loutolim, Salcete, had me tutored at home and later sent me to school. Until I was five, I was the only child in the family. My Aunt Clotilde amused me with cradle songs which I picked up readily.

"Goan cradle songs are based on the simple lives of the poor," continued Clara. They tell of everyday incidents. They dwell on family ties, which are particularly close in Goa. They recapture the beauty of the countryside, the child's delight in birds and flowers and his pleasure in eating."

Goa abounds in a variety of birds. But the drab crow is regarded with as much affection as the jewel-tailed peacock, for it is believed, he is the harbinger of good news. A persistent cawing on a tree indicates that a letter or visitor is on the way.

Animals also figure in Konkani lullabys. The tiny mouse is as much the subject of song as the stately panther.

Clara could well be described as a liberated woman for her times — the early 'twenties.' She married her childhood sweetheart. Camillo de Menezes, at the age of 16. She continued her education after marriage up to Lyceum (the Portuguese equivalent of the matriculation). She then took a teachers training course opting for service outside her native village, Loutolim. She served for some time in Diu. She finds her present assignment very congenial. "It's a form of play, not labour, to persuade country folk to sing for me the lullabys they remember. It takes me back to the enchanted world of my own childhood."

Cecilia D'Souza

PASSING THROUGH

YVONNE MATIGNON

FORGING CULTURAL LINKS

Yvonne Matignon has been living abroad for 15 years now, but her interest in India and Indian culture seem to have grown in the years she has spent away from India — a case of absence makes the heart grow fonder?

"Possibly," she laughed, then went on to explain how she became interested in the subject. "My father-in-law was actually very interested in Indian architecture and knows quite a lot about it. Then there used to be talks or discussions on India sometimes, and I was always being asked questions about India — its culture and religions and that encouraged me to find out more about it."

Before her marriage, Yvonne — then Gonsalves — was an air-hostess with Air

India. After her marriage to a Frenchman, she went wherever her husband's work took her — first to Indonesia and now she lives in Morocco, though their home in Paris has always provided a base.

Yvonne had just been to Tirupati, at the same time that Mrs. Gandhi was there "What strikes me most is the tremendous faith that characterises everything that the Indian does. That is the nation's strength," she said.

Yvonne believes that the West has become very materialistic. "World War II destroyed faith — that is why Americans and Europeans come here to seek 'soul' that is religion, which they have lost. Transcendental meditation gives you time to withdraw into yourself, religion gives you some breathing space, which is essential when life is lived at such a hectic pace."

When she lived in Indonesia, she did much to encourage that country's cultural exchanges with India and she is doing the same in Morocco now. "My aim is to promote the comprehension of Indian culture abroad." She works for the Indian Tourist Board.

Her interest in history has led her to take a keen interest in the culture of the countries she happens to be living in. She has studied the tribal people of Morocco and Algeria. The beautiful silver jewellery that the Moroccons wear is very like the silver jewellery made in Kathiawar, she says "In fact the Muslims of Kathiawar resemble the North African tribes in face, dress, in the ornaments they wear and the pottery they make, and this opens up fascinating areas of historical research," said Yvonne.

Her visit to India has been very productive. Academics, religious leaders, were very generous about sharing their knowledge, and visits to the various temples and historical sites — Humpi, Vijayanagar, Tirupati, were a marvellous experience.

Yvonne is, at present working on a book on the influence of Indian culture on the world. Besides English, she speaks and writes Hindi and French fluently and is studying Arabic and German.

S. G.

CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

A brief course on how to take photographs instead of just snapshots.

-10

THE PROUD PARENT

It's a safe bet that more people buy their first camera after the birth of their first baby than at any other time of life. Yet, how many parents do really succeed in making good child pictures? Most pictures show the child staring wonder-eyed at the camera, almost suggesting that the parent is saying, "Look here, look here, look here."

Child photography is your pet subject, so I am going to devote the next few lessons to this subject. Today's cameras have an eye-level viewfinder. So, when you "shoot" your child from a height of five feet or so, you see the top of its head instead of much of its face.

My first picture shows this fundamental mistake. So kneel down or sit on the floor with your camera. If this is inconvenient, then place the child on a table or parapet as in the second photograph. Old fashioned box cameras had a reflex finder so that you could hold the camera at waist level or even floor level. More about this later.

Homi Kharas

HI YA HONEY!

By an Alves called Johnnie

WOULD LIKE TO EXCHANGE WIFE FOR CAR

The Sunday issue of "The Times of India" is a very interesting issue. The paper is minting money through the matrimonial boom. And why not? One look at the matrimonial column, and you will agree that we have more young men and women to marry than things to buy or sell. I am told quite a few couples have met through the medium of the press. During my time we had no such help. Either we met on the village green and then exchanged secret notes till we were caught, or our fathers met at the local hooch shop, thought it was a good idea and promised to get their children married.

George and Tecla had a bit of both, the lucky couple! They had fallen in love at least a year before their fathers shared a bottle of feni and finalised their marriage. The fact that George had previously advertised in the "Konkon Kobar" is unknown to Tecla to this day.

At a party recently I met a very loving couple. Looked like they were made for each other. No wonder. They met through a newspaper that only advertises goods which have passed the ISI standard.

And then there was the man who advertised, "Wanted a wife." He received hundreds of replies saying, "You can have mine."

Matrimonial advertisements are often a source of entertainment and more often than not highly exaggerated. I have seldom seen an ad where a man was not drawing a four-figure salary or a lady who was not slim, tall and fair. I was a fool not to have done what a recent advertiser did. "Available, young man capable of handling financial affairs of future father-in-law." What a wonderful start for a happy marriage!

The ad that really struck me as an invitation to a better life appeared only last Sunday. "Wanted for an extremely beautiful girl, fine figure, good financial security, a good man, eventual idea, marriage." I rang up the newspaper immediately to get full particulars of the address, but the 65-year-old watchman answered the phone and said that all the gentlemen in the office including the editor had gone over to the lady's place.

My wife thinks that it would be fun to lend me to another woman for a week. She believes that I would come home running, preferring the old to the new. The Times would then have to display another heading: "Used husbands available." The ad for me would read something like this: "Willing to exchange 1946 husband with 1970 model. One owner, in very good condition, fully insured, will pay cash or throw in gas cylinder." Or, "Very sparingly used husband available for immediate delivery (the pun is intended). Good do-it-yourself man, used to obeying instantly."

If I got an offer and some really rich widow was interested in taking me away, I would have to get rid of the problem on hand. I would then have to insert an ad that read something like this: "Will consider any reasonable offer for excellent wife in good top condition, responds immediately to petting, gifts and fur coats. Very good chassis, all she needs is a coat of paint. Must sell today as owner going in for new model."

This mutual exchange of spouses would I believe work. It would do away with the time honoured custom of having affairs.

Wives could then look out for the type of husbands they want. . . and keep looking.

Until next time then.

QUICK QUOTES ON FLATTERY

Everyone likes flattery.

Benjamin Disraeli

Flattery never hurts a man unless he inhales.

Harry Emerson Fosdick

Envy is the sincerest form of flattery.

Churton Collins

Flattery is the art of telling another person exactly what he thinks of himself.

Paul Gilbert

Flattery is false coin that is only current thanks to our vanity.

La Rochefoucauld

I hate flattery. I can flatter myself very well when I want to.

Hannen Swaffer

Flattery's the food of fools.

Jonathan Swift

The arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self.

Francis Bacon

Few human beings are proof against the implied flattery of rapt attention.

Jack Woodford

There's one thing certain about flattery — it's not done with mirrors

Caroline Clark

Flattery won't hurt you if you don't swallow it.

Frank Hubbard

The more we love our friends, the less we flatter them.

Moliere

I hate careless flattery, the kind that exhausts you in your effort to believe it.

Wilson Mizner

Before you flatter a man grossly to his face, you should consider whether or not your flattery is worth his having.

Samuel Johnson

David Gunston

PARVEEN BABI:
"EXHAUSTING THE LIMITS..."

Adelaide Chand

Around this time last year, things looked bright on all fronts for Parveen Babi — she had everything going for her; her new, disciplined, dedicated attitude towards her work had her all set to hit the top spot on the star ratings, and she was considered a very real threat to top contenders for the Number One position, Zeenat and Hema.

But the fast-paced, high-geared pressures of her three-shifts-a-day lifestyle began to tell on the highly sensitive, insecure, Parveen and soon she was forced to withdraw from the world of showbiz, her mental equilibrium shattered, her psyche traumatized.

Now, many months later, with Parveen having returned, a subdued shadow of her former exuberant self, and with producers in a quandary due to their productions being considerably delayed by Parveen's inability to honour her commitments, the following interview which she gave only a couple of months before her reported "breakdown" and mental collapse, assumes a special significance:

"Creativity without organization is a total waste. I've decided to be organized even if the people around me are not."

On Her Rapidly Improving Career :

"I believe my career is doing well because of the amount of labour and concentration I have been pouring into my work. I was born a very intense, a very passionate person. Whatever I do, I do with my whole heart and soul. Right now it's my work that I'm totally involved with. Before, it was just a job, now it's something that gives me pleasure and considerable satisfaction."

On Ambition:

"Grabbing opportunities does not necessarily make one a good artiste. My main aim is not to step into anybody's shoes, nor to reach any particular position. I don't want to chase numbers. I just want to be good, really good."

On Her Entry Into Films:

"It was one of those things that just happened. Once I entered this field, I discovered that apart from Zeenat, I was the only girl with a mod, sophisticated, Westernized image and outlook — I guess that's why people kept comparing the two of us. But I don't really think we were very similar, except for the fact that we were both educated and came from the same social strata and background. The constant comparisons might have made me self-conscious if it weren't for Zeenat and her behaviour towards me — she never made me feel that I was trying to imitate her or something."

On The Lack Of System In the Film Industry:

"Things are so disorderly here I would love it if the Film Industry switched over to the style of film making they have in the West. . . everything's so systematic and well-organised out there. Creativity without organization is a total waste. I've decided to be organized even if the people around me are not."

On Her Life As An Actress:

"When your situation is such that you're playing with your emotions twenty-four hours a day, you're constantly being pressed to do your utmost, and exert yourself to the maximum in front of the camera, you've got to cope with quite a few personalities within yourself. That is because when you've got to portray a variety of personalities, you have to infuse verisimilitude into your performance. Sometimes you just sit back and marvel at your own capacity for work, your own ability to rush around doing three shifts day after day, but then you're being paid to squeeze the last itsy-bitsy drop out of yourself."

On Her Independence:

"My situation has always been of the kind where I've had no choice but to be independent. My father died at a very early age, so I've had no choice but to shoulder all responsibilities for myself and my mother. But it's only now that I feel I've become really independent, because in the past I had people to depend on emotionally.

It's a myth that independent women are necessarily hard and invulnerable. You can remain every bit a woman and still be independent. To do this, you have to be as open as a child, as shrewd as an explorer and as intrepid as an adventurer. You see, we live in a world where it's often difficult to distinguish between illusion and reality — often we don't know whether what we're seeing is real blood or just Max Factor colour.

As a woman you've got to have all your faculties around you to protect yourself, and yet at the same time you know that there's nothing very precious to protect, that it's all going to go one day! It's paradoxical, I know, but then life is a balancing act between paradoxes. It's a Catch-22 all the way. One of my favourite sayings is from a book called "The Myth Of Sisyphus" by Albert Camus. It goes, "O my soul, do not strive for the immortal, but instead try to exhaust the limits of the possible."

She ended with "Sometimes I feel like laughing and crying at the same time. . . life is so funny and yet so sad."

And so it has proved for poor lost and lonely Parveen — a tragicomedy with sad and empty overtones. Let's hope the tragic part of it is over and done with, that her future is bright and cheerful — whether within or outside the Film Industry.

Photograph: Rakesh Shrestha

CHILDREN AND V.D.

a conspiracy of silence

THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF V.D. AMONG CHILDREN HAS BEEN IGNORED BOTH BY THE PUBLIC AND BY HEALTH AUTHORITIES. THE REASON FOR THIS IS OUR PRUDERY AND A TENDENCY TO PRETEND THAT SOMETHING OF WHICH WE ARE ASHAMED DOES NOT EXIST

H. P. Vora

The United Nations had declared 1979 as the International Year for the Child (IYC) to focus public attention on the plight of children and to improve the quality of childhood. The IYC has come and gone, but the welfare of children is a continuing process. India has adopted a national policy for children and declared her children as "supremely important assets whose nurture and welfare are her responsibility." There are the National Children's Board and the National Commission for the IYC. However, these statements and the course of action are like two parallel lines which will never meet — pious platitude on one side and the callous inaction on the other. How can we overcome this? And what action needs to be taken urgently to make our children healthy and happy?

The writer has heard many talks and read a number of articles in newspapers covering many aspects of childhood disabilities, such as mental and physical handicaps, blindness, deafness, nutritional deficiency, etc. and the number of children in each category and the measures taken or suggested for their correction. However, it is remarkable that no reference is made in these to the havoc played by venereal disease which is one of the most serious hazards for children.

The high incidence of V.D. among children, the disabilities, diseases and deaths that follow, have been totally ignored both by the public and by health authorities. The reason for this is of course our prudery and our national tendency to pretend that something of which we are ashamed does not exist.

This conspiracy of silence regarding V.D. is not new and is quite familiar to most venereologists. The age-old assumption that venereal diseases are the result of promiscuous sex relations and therefore the wages of sin continues to weigh heavily on the public mind implying thereby that those who suffer from it deserve it and sympathy need not be wasted on them.

This moralistic attitude ignores that children suffering from V.D. are being punished for the sins of their parents or are the innocent victims of infection or forced sex. Congenital syphilis acquired in the uterus or at the time of delivery, person to person transmission of V.D. by direct or indirect contact is common.

It is necessary to emphasise that these diseases attain significant proportions and contribute greatly to childhood illness, disabilities and death. If our proclaimed concern for children is to have any meaning, we should first recognise that V.D. affects children in many tragic ways. But we lack any reliable statistics which is the first need in the battle to save children from its insidious and cruel grip.

By adopting an ostrich like attitude to V.D., we are victimizing innocent children, and by our hypocrisy in this matter, we are weakening the nation itself. These diseases have a serious impact not only on the individual who got the disease originally, but also on the other members of the family, even the whole community. Of all the diseases inflicting man, these are the least confined, the least manifest, the most insidious.

However, because we smugly regard V.D. as deserved punishment, the facilities for its treatment and cure are minimal, and neglected, ignored or often even unknown to the victim, it can affect a foetus in the uterus as well as when it is born and outside the womb. And it often spreads from these children to their brothers and sisters, the neighbouring children by fondling, kissing and other personal contacts.

The child population of the country is said to constitute nearly 40 per cent of the total population. If we assume the population of India now to be nearing 700 million, the child population comes to 280 million. How many of this large number of children suffer from venereal diseases? Annually about 125 to 130 of 1000 new born infants die soon after their birth. How many of these deaths are due to syphilis? How many deaths are due to virus infection acquired venereally? What is the role of syphilis and gonorrhoea in disabilties like blindness, deafness, paralysis and mental retardation among children?

Treponema pallida of syphilis are capable of invading the developing foetus in the uterus or soon after its birth and causing abortion, miscarriage stillbirth or post-natal death. All these questions demand answers from health authorities, yet they seem to consider them outside their province — as if children suffering from V.D. caused diseases are less worthy of attention than those suffering from diseases of other types. As if these children are not the nation's responsibility, they have not even bothered so far to get countrywide statistics on this.

While searching for information, the writer came across a report on the city of Bombay for the year 1920. This can at least give an idea of the havoc V.D. can play today with the city more congested, with sex more promis-

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LEFT: An 11 year old boy, the victim of syphilis.

cuous. "The J. J. Hospital, Bombay," the report read, "recorded that 18.7 per cent of its indoor patients and 23.3 per cent of its outdoor patients had evidence of V.D. At the Motibai and Cama hospitals for women, 10 to 15 per cent of the patients were seropositive for syphilis. Among the 2000 annual still births in the city, 18.5 per cent were due to syphilis. Out of the 9000 children that died annually, 3000 died of congenital syphilis. Of the blind children 30 per cent, of the deaf children 25 per cent, of the mentally deficient children 50 per cent were due to V.D." But this report had no effect on the health authorities.

Venereal diseases are not static and their incidence multiplies like compound interest. Dr. T. Guthe, C.M.O. for communicable diseases to the W.H.O. stated in 1965, "The incidence of V.D. is very high in India, and Bombay ranks among the ten most highly infected cities of the world." Today, the actual situation regarding V.D. is likely to be worse. It is estimated that there are more than 70 million new cases of V.D. a year and a yearly rise of ten to 12 per cent in their incidence in the country. This is an alarming situation indeed, but no one seems to be least upset or concerned. The figure for childhood V.D. may easily surpass the 10 million a year mark. And still we refuse to wake up.

At the Institute of Venereology, Madras, 894 children out of 41,020 patients were treated for V.D. in 1978. At the V.D. Centre, Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi, 2067 children out of 202,803 patients and 1131 children out of 75,483 patients were treated for V.D. in 1974 and 1975. Three autopsy studies on still born infants in Tamil Nadu State revealed Treponema pallida in tissues of (1) 3 per cent out of 164, (2) 9 per cent out of 35 and (3) 5 per cent out of 22 still born infants, confirming syphilis as the cause of death. This gives an overall average rate of 5.6 per cent still births due to syphilis. The studies of seropositivity rates in pregnant women revealed 8 per cent in Madras and 12 per cent in Madurai during 1953-1958; 23.3 per cent in Nagpur in 1966 and 7 per cent in Bombay in 1964. These observations confirm that a significant proportion of foetal deaths and disabilities are traceable to syphilis in pregnant women.

If these figures and findings have any meaning, it becomes crystal clear that serologic tests for syphilis must form a part of the routine check up of pregnant women and that prompt and adequate therapy must be provided for the positive women to save children from syphilitic hazards. The tests must also include gonococcal infection by smear examination and culture.

To achieve these objectives the most essenital prerequisite is the establishment of free, reliable and quick laboratory services all over the country including rural areas. In actual fact this essential facility has been overlooked in many medical institutions. Primary health centres established all over the country are conspicuously devoid of this facility. Does not this show ineptitude, callous indifference and utter lack of foresight in our health planners and administrators?

During early maternal syphilis, the risk of infection of the foetus is 95 per cent and the foetal loss could not be less than 50 per cent. Treponema pallidum is transmitted trans-placentally to the developing foetus as early as 10 to 12 weeks after conception. An untreated congenital syphilitic infant may die, or develop a variety of diseases, or the infection may remain latent up to the age of 15. Serologic surveys have confirmed that such unrecognised infection is common and that it is the most important source for spreading the infection.

Again, many innocent children, irrespective of age and sex, get infected with syphilis or gonorrhoea or both by sexual contacts with highly infectious persons, or as the result of sexual assaults on them by infected persons. It is believed by some that sexual intercourse with children cures syphilis. And many an innocent child is a victim of this vicious superstition. But such instances do not come to notice for fear of punishment, shame or ignorance. Such children become carriers of infection themselves.

Gonococcal infection in pregnant women can cause blindness or systematic infection in the infants. We have today adequate knowledge and the techniques like dark-field microscopy, highly specific tests, biopsy of the liver or tissues, immunofluorescent studies and staining, electric microscopy, automated tests, improved culture media, etc., by which the diseases can be identified. And once identified, we have the drugs to prevent or cure the infection.

V.D. in children has become a pressing problem. This must be widely recognised and every attempt must be made to contain it. It must be stressed that V.D. can be both prevented and cured. Therefore there is no excuse for allowing this dreaded disease to

Continued on page 47

ABOVE : Fac es of congenital syphilis showing deformity of nose and flattening of malar bones.

An impairment of vision results due to corneal opacity.

BELOW : Gonococcal opthalmia which has resulted in total loss of vision in the left eye.

When your hair is natural, should your shampoo be synthetic?

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Be a Naturelle woman

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Natural is beautiful

THE ANGUISHED CRY : POETRY BY DALIT WOMEN

Continued from page 13

Jyoti Lanjewar

Jyoti Lanjewar's poems have appeared in "Yugvani" "Anuradha", "Rajas", "Asmitadarsh", "Nikaya" magazines as well as in newspapers like "Tarun Bharat", "Nagpur Patrika", "Gaonkari", "Mahasagar", "Lokmat", "Batmidar", etc. Some of her poems have also been broadcast from the Moscow Radio, and the Nagpur station of the All India Radio. Her poems possess strong social awareness and resentment against the inhuman treatment given to Dalits. This makes the poet one of the leading Dalit women poets of protest.

KASHI LIHU KAVITA?: HOW SHALL I COMPOSE A POEM?

This poem is addressed to caste Hindus.

The darkness in the hut near the village gate
is burning me;
The tears from the eyes of the hungry
Are sucking my life;
The grievances on their dry lips
Are treasured in my heart.
Half-naked bodies with worn out clothes
Raise a question mark in my eyes.
And now tell me, O builders of the
Wall of casteism,
How can I write a poem?
In the fine gardens in the courtyards of
Your houses, on leaves and flowers,
And on the cruel beasts from this
Locality of the inhumans . . .
How can I write a poem?

JANMA: BIRTH

In this poem the poet laments over the pitiable plight of the poor Dalits living in a castiest society, where they are reduced to the level of beasts of burden.

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A Dalit woman addresses the following lines to her child:

Why did you take your birth
In this locality of the shopkeepers?
Here the trees are chopped off,
And the lamp posts are rusted;
And the roads are dusty.
Here you have neither the tin plates of advertisements
Nor the columns of cement for your shelter.
Flowers bloom here inside the barbed fencing.
Elephants, horses, have now retired from here,
And the enlistment of men as beasts has begun.
For pulling the burden of humanity
With preparation to join the human stable.
Why did you take your birth here?

ANGAI: LULLABY

Here, the poet throws a searching light on one of the worst evils in modern Indian society, namely, poor women taking to prostitution. The poem describes how a poor Dalit woman with a child was forced to become a prostitute very much against her will. While the mother is busy with her tragic sale of female flesh, the child cries. The mother would have sung a lullaby to make him sleep. But, alas a lullaby is impossible because her lips are forcibly clamped. She laments over the fact, and mentally asks the child to go to sleep. Her child has only the darkness to keep him company. The poor mother's heart laments over this tragic fate. The poem concludes with these lines :

No one should be born
For such a lullaby,
Better if I had remained childless.
My child, why did you take birth in my womb?

ASTITVA: EXISTENCE

This is another touching poem which throws light on the distressing plight of the poor woman who has to sell her flesh, her blooming youth, just to earn her livelihood. She is married, and has a child, but on account of her intense poverty she is unable to maintain her honour in a society of inhuman and hungry wolves moving all around her. She is thus compelled to forget her self-existence for a few coins. The unfortunate woman gives expression to her feelings in the following lines :

The corpse of my existence
Has been burnt to ashes long back
In this locality of the Inhumans.
And, after ruining me, the wind
Has changed its course in the same direction.
Now, there is no morning
Coming with the chirping of sparrows.
I listen to the crows,
Throughout the night.
I witness in the awesome silence of the night,
The cruel dance of the devils of hunger.
For a handful of rice, and a quarter of bread
Under the cover of darkness,
A blooming young girl is selling her Satitva.
Although the flow of motherly love, affection, has dried,
Instead of the milk of her breasts.
She puts the blood in the mouth of her child;
And drinking the poison of her life,
The mother's heart weeps . . .
But out of this ravenous humanity
A sprout came forth
To break the head of this pride,
And to demolish the edifices of the rich
Closing fast his little hands
My son has just opened his eyes.

At the end I may add that Jyoti Lanjewar writes on the problems of the poor and of the Dalit women with a burning indignation. Her poems possess a strong social awareness. Naturally, her poems have the capacity to kindle the sensitive hearts of the young.

To be continued

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

BOMBAY

The Indian Section of the Ninety-Nines, Inc. (International Organisation of Women Pilots) felicitated three young women of the sub-continent who have been selected for training as airline pilots. They are Syeda Rokhsana and Yasmin Rahman of Bangladesh Biman, and Saudamini Deshmukh of Indian Airlines.

The Ninety-Nines also honoured Prem Mathur, the first commercial woman pilot of India and Durba Banerjee, the first woman to join Indian Airlines as a pilot. Special recognition was given to Bhuwon Devi Gupta and M. R. Lalitha, the only women technicians of Indian Airlines, and Mithu Banerjee, another woman technician employed by Air Works India.

Air Vice Marshal I. S. Chhabra, AVSM, Air Officer Commanding, Maritime Air Operations, IAF, Bombay, presided over the function, and Chanda Sawant, Governor of Ninety-Nines Inc., gave the opening address.

* * *

The Film Industry Education and Charitable Trust has decided to offer scholarships and free books to school-going children of needy parents in the film industry. Parents or children may send their applications to the secretary of the Trust at 'Cutch Castle', 1st floor, S. V. Patel Road. Bombay-400 004 on or before June 5, 1980, along with the mark sheet and letters of recommendation of the respective Producer-members and/or respective Association.

* * *

The A.K. Munshi Stree Mandal, one of the prominent women's organisations, inaugurated a Dental X-ray Department and held a Prize Distribution function for a Music and Drawing competition by mentally retarded children of different schools in Bombay.

* * *

On the occasion of the tenth Annual Day function of Sasmira's Institute of man-made textiles, film star Amol Palekar distributed prizes to winners of various competitions. There was also a variety entertainment programme by the students, at Ravindra Natya Mandir, Prabhadevi.

* * *

The B.A.R.C. Staff Club (the official representative body of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, for sports and cultural activities) recently conducted the finals of a "Quiz" contest for its members. Four teams consisting of BARC scientists and engineers took part in the finals conducted by Mr. Bikram Vohra.

Mr. Vohra was welcomed by Mr. V.K. Bhatia, General Secretary, and Mr. S. Challappa, President of the BARC Staff Club.

* * *

DELHI

The "Guys & Dolls" boutique recently organised its exhibition at Lodhi hotel. There were eye-catching churidar-kameez sets and a cool range of summer dresses and kaftans. Special attractions were suede-lined leather handbags at reasonable prices.

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1. At a function held at the Air India Auditorium in Bombay to felicitate women pilots of Bangladesh Biman and Indian Airlines, are seen (from left) Brinda Gamber, Rabia Futehally; Dr. Sunila Bhajekar, Chanda Sawant, Governor, the Ninety-Nines, Inc., Indian Section., chief guest Air Vice Marshal, I. S. Chhabra, Capt. N. Pereira, Tajul Islam, Mohini Shroff, Syeda Rokhsana, Capt. Durba Banerjee, Yasmin Rahman, Saudamini Deshmukh, and Prem Mathur (partly seen).

2. At the annual function of the NAB-Mata Lachmi Nursery for the Blind, Reena Bhandari assists little Jayshree, who is deaf and blind.

4

CALCUTTA

At their annual prize-giving ceremony, the Lighthouse for Blind, stressed the need for the social rights for the blind. Mr. S. N. Ghosh, President of the organisation, laid emphasis on the firms and Government departments offering employment to the blind who have successfully completed their educational and vocational training with them. The Blind Boys Academy, Narendrapur, reiterated their demands for social rights for sightless people, their spokesman being their Principal, Mrs. M. Dasgupta. The handicrafts of the blind were also displayed.

* * *

Sangit Shyamala held a function at Shri Shikshayatan to felicitate the maestro, Radhika Mohan Bhattacharya. A scroll of honour and a cheque of Rs. 10,000 was handed over to the artiste. A very interesting picture of the artiste's life was provided at the press conference by Buddhadeb Dasgupta, his seniormost pupil, and a noted sarod player himself. Radhika Mohan has composed a number of ragas including Lalit Manjari, Arun Kedar and Shashi Kanada. He received the Academy award in 1971.

BANGALORE

The Altrusa Club of Bangalore organised a benefit dance recital by Rashmi Hegde at Ravindra Kalakshetra. Rashmi's programme was mainly devoted to Mohini Attam, which is a blend of Bharata Natyam and Kathakali. The Governor of Karnataka, Mr. Govind Narain and Mrs. Chandra Narain were the chief guests.

* * *

Uma Varma presented an exhibition of paintings at the Max Mueller Bhavan. Uma's work was in a variety of media— oil pastels, wax crayon, chalk, poster, water colours and oil.

HYDERABAD

Lady Beetham, wife of Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Beetham, Chief of Air Staff, Royal Air Force, United Kingdom, visited the Air Force Academy recently. The distinguished guests had come on a good-will mission. During their visit, the local Air Force Officers' Ladies Club put up a cultural programme in their honour.

* * *

The Special Care School For the Mentally Retarded has been taken over by the Ladies Welfare Centre of BHEL under the integrated programme for special care of mentally retarded children. The census of such children with low mental I.Q. was taken and of these, 18 educable boys and girls were selected in the first phase. The school which is housed in the St. Ann's School premises has an experienced teacher, consultant, and parent counsellor supervising the school periodically. A trained craft teacher has also been appointed.

A special feature of this school is the phased integration of these children with normal children. They join in common prayers, P.T., and crafts so that they can grow up without complexes. To commemorate the International Year of the Child, the Ladies Welfare Centre organised a camp for retarded children from six city schools.

The activities of the Ladies Welfare Centre are not confined to the township. They have adopted 27 healthy children of leprosy patients including thirteen girls. The guild of servi is running a home for these children in Ameerpet.

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3 Children at study in the Special Care School for the Mentally Retarded, a project which has been taken over by the Ladies Welfare Centre of BHEL in Hyderabad.

4. Kumari Priti garlands Mr. T. N. Singh, Governor, West Bengal, at her first Bharat Natyam recital at Kala Mandir in Calcutta.

5. Members of the Coimbatore North Ladies Circle No. 11 are seen with the President of Ladies Circle, India, Gita Banker at the inauguration of the donation of classrooms to the Govt. High School at Vellalore.

6. The Toran Cafetaria was inaugurated at the site of the sun temple at Modhera (Gujarat) by Mr. C. Raja, Chairman, Tourism Corporation of Gujerat (ext. right). Also seen, are Mr. V. Shah and Mrs. P. Jaykrishna.

7. Deepa and Mukta are seen at an exhibition of cotton saris at their newly opened show-room, "Jhoomer" in Delhi.

More photographs overleaf.

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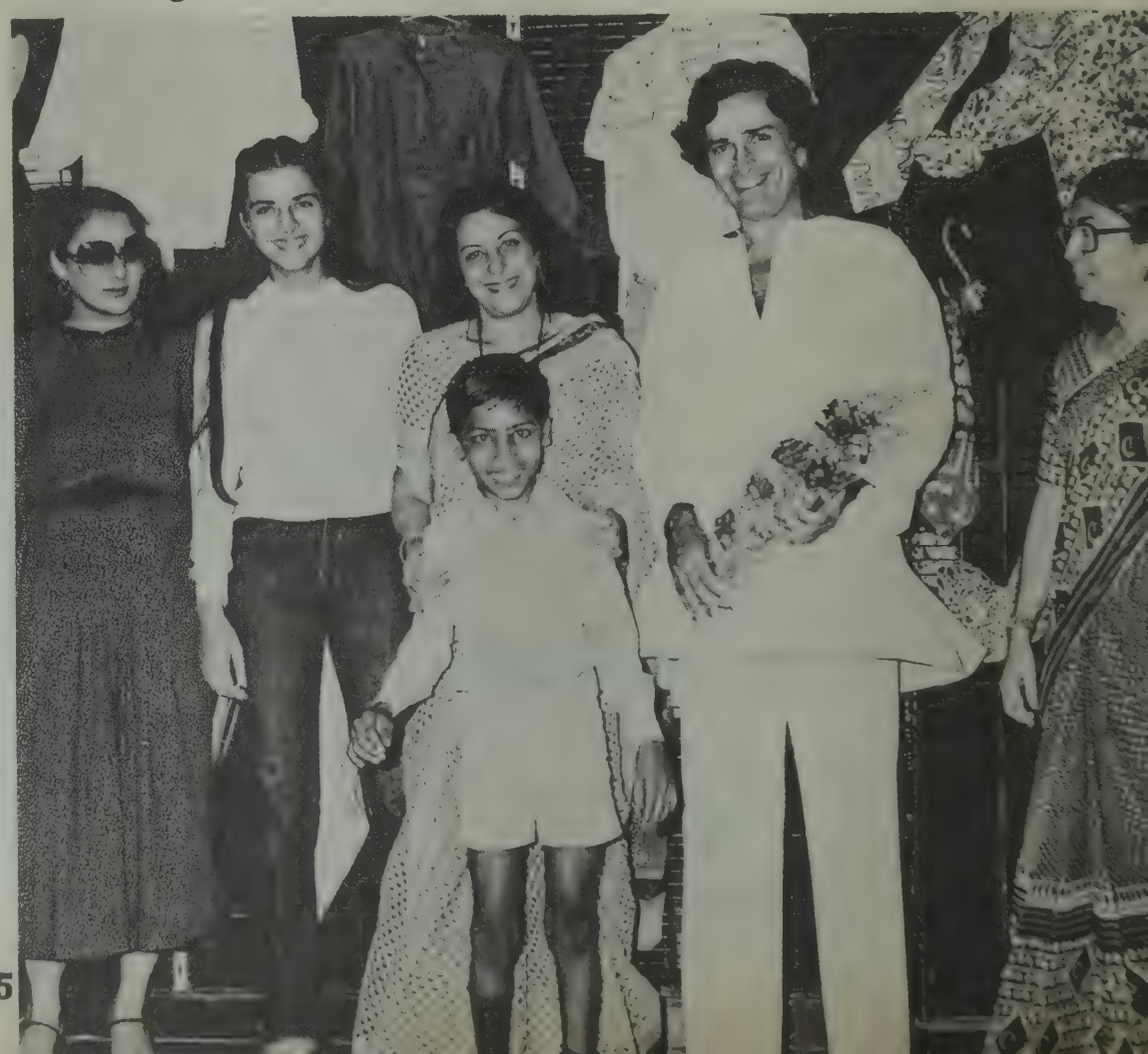
1. Seen at the launching of Associated Breweries and Distilleries' new fermented beer, London Premium, are (from left) Mrs. T. Pereira, Mrs. Murugesan, Kumkum Dwivedi and Mrs. Lawyer.

2. At the Syrian National Day celebrations held at Taj Mahal Hotel, are seen (from left) Mr. H. E. Abdulla Al-Khani, Syrian Ambassador, Mrs. S. El-Ejel, Mr. S. El-Ejel, Consul General, Syria; Mrs. A. Al-Khani, Mr. R. Patel and Mrs. R. Patel.

3. Mr. S. Horino, Consul General, Japan, and Mrs. Horino (3rd and 6th from left) celebrated the birthday of His Majesty, the emperor of Japan. Also seen are (from left) Mrs. E. Schaller, Mrs. J. Jasper, Mrs. A. Padamsee; and Mrs. P. Gavai.

4. At an exhibition of paintings held at Taj Art Gallery, are seen (from left) the artist, Mrs. Rajeshwari Tiwari, Dimple Khanna, who was the chief guest, and Mr. P. K. Tiwari.

5. Film star Shashi Kapoor inaugurated an exhibition and sale held by the Spastics Society at the Aakar Art Gallery recently. Also seen are (from left) Rima Kapoor, Anjali Dutt, Mrs. Nargis Dutt, and Miss Sheela Christie.



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CHILDREN AND V.D.

Continued from page 41

Therefore there is no excuse for allowing this dread disease to spread and destroy its victims, especially young, innocent children.

Routine testing for syphilis and gonorrhoea must be made compulsory at all health care centres and widespread, reliable and quick laboratory facilities for the same must be made freely available all over the country. This is the basic need which has been totally neglected all these years. The incidence of congenital syphilis, childhood deaths and disabilities can be markedly reduced, nay, completely eradicated, if proper steps are taken in time.

How deep-rooted and widespread our prejudice against V.D. is can be seen from the fact that neither Indian universities nor the Medical Council of India, whose elementary duty it is to maintain proper standards of medical education and medical services, is the least inclined to adopt progressive measures with regard to venereology. The National Health Service in the United Kingdom has venereologists in addition to dermatologists on the panel of specialists, but the official agencies that manage the E.S.I.S., the C.H.S. and the public and private hospitals in this country still display Victorian prudery and refuse to appoint qualified venereologists on their staff to provide proper medical services to V.D. patients in their establishments.

No wonder. one W.H.O. expert said, "More than 90 per cent of venereal patients have to go without proper medical care even in the city of Bombay," which can boast of many fine hospitals. It is not difficult to imagine the needless diseases and deaths and the economic loss that result because of this incompetent, inefficient and inadequate medicare.

Unfortunateiy, this age-old attitude to V.D. is found not only among the lay public but also in the medical profession. Some doctors occupying very high posts in medicine (outside venereology) look down upon venereologists as third grade professionals. So they have no place in medical education or in planning medical services. Though so many seminars are held or special issues of medical journals brought out on children's diseases, even a reference to venereal diseases is a rarity. Such a strong allergy to the subject is hard to find anywhere else in the world. No one comes forward to launch a project to educate the public on V.D. and ignorance, compounded by prejudice, condemns innocent children, born and unborn, to a life of disease and disability or early death.

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Devi

THE SUCCESSORS ARE HERE

The successor to the Ghazal King is here; Gulam Ali from Pakistan is the newest status symbol. When Mehdi Hassan was in town recently for nearly thee months, he was stunned to find himself dethroned, and people, especially filmdom, "turned on" to Gulam Ali, whose sponsor also is same old Ashok Singh, notorious for his handling, rather mishandling, of Mehdi Hassan. "Time will tell the truth," Mr. Singh had said. Well, seeing Mehdi Saab's high spirits, loose talk and irregular hours, people did not need much time to come near the Truth. "The next time I come, I will need no sponsor," Mehdi Hassan had said. This time he was saved the trouble, there was no audience. Gulam Ali, in comparison, is witty, cheerful and communicative, does not touch alcohol and is in bed (alone) by 10.30 p.m. when not performing. A cool cat, he is too "pohaucha hua" compared to the arrogant but magical Mehdi. And of course, ninety per cent of people love regular habits, and they are going to like this man with regular habits. When I ordered chicken sandwiches, I was surprised that Gulam Saab polished them all off, instead of pestering the waiters with Allah Allah stuff like "Is it halal ghosh?" or "Was the chicken's neck squeezed?", etc.

Jaidev, Kalyanji, Aziz Naza were on duty to the "successor" to Melody King, and Sunil Dutt was the first to host a cosy lunch at his Ajanta office. Sunil went nostalgic about Lahore and the Jhelum river and Partition, whilst I switched on "Rocky" music. The first disc was cut that very morning. "Rocky" music is Hangama and Sunjay Dutt has sent me his Salaam: "Dosto ko salaam, Dushman ko salaam, Rocky mere naam". That is the Sunjay Dutt presentation song on a motor-bike. Sunil is contemplating a party, so is Manoj. Vinod Khanna, Mehra, etc. are making constant enquiries about Gulam Ali's whereabouts.

He will have three shows in Bombay and jet off to Delhi, Calcutta and Hyderabad. Only pink colour roses have been ordered to decorate the stage, and the city is set to get 'turned on' to Gulam Ali and I am looking forward to a fortnight of nasha, hangama with filmdom excelling in mehmannavazi to the singer from the land of their childhood (or is it youth?).

PS: Gulam Saab, unlike his predecessor who was stuck to Amitabh Bachchan and Jaya Bhaduri throughout Javed's dinner. revealed no star craze. In fact, even "Abdullah" 's trial in Delhi he saw in bits and talked more of his fans, some Mr. and Mrs. Vinod Chopra (present at the trial) than Zeenat Aman. "I don't see films, I have never seen a complete film," says Gulam Saab.

MAKE YOUR GARDEN GROW

An introduction to the art of kitchen gardening and the pleasures of growing your own vegetables **–8**

HARVESTING THE PRODUCE

B. M. Desai

Having mastered the technique of planning and raising a beautiful terrace kitchen garden, you must also know the art of maintaining it in a good, healthy and productive condition.

There are some finer points and practices which lead to a successful and impressive kitchen garden. You should be quite aware that you are dealing with life — viz. living plants. Life responds to better care. If neglected, the plant succumbs to various hazards which ultimately lead to its death. Hence, it is very important that the garden that you have raised with so much of your time, money and dedication should continue to be well cared for as well. Once the initial requirements are met, the established growing garden does not demand much of your time for day to day care. However, it is very essential that you visit your garden every day and this may easily be combined with the watering of the garden. While in the garden, a keen experienced eye will immediately spot any abnormal or diseased condition, and the presence of any insect or pest on the plant. This will enable you to take prompt remedial measures to check the pest and/or the disease. Additionally, you should spare some more time, at least once a fortnight — say on a holiday — to attend to other periodical operations such as weeding, mulching, spraying, applying fertilizers, etc.

Soon the time comes for harvesting the delicious, tender produce of choice vegetables from your self-grown kitchen garden. The harvesting should be done at the correct time and at suitable periodic intervals, so that the produce is available to you in the right stage of ripeness. While plucking fruits, remove the fruit along with the full length of the stalk. Do not twist the stalk, as this will crush and damage the tissues of the stem or the branch. Instead, use a sharp knife to detach the fruit from the plant. See that the plant is not jerked, lest the roots of the plant get disturbed.

Let us now look to some of the minor and apparently not so significant points which are often over-looked but which play an important role in the raising and maintaining of a good kitchen garden.

Terrace garden plants, being in the open, are exposed to the dust floating in the air. As time passes, a layer of dust settles on the leaves. This interferes with the photosynthetic and other metabolic activities of the plant, and the leaves are unable to utilize the solar energy fully. To keep the leaves active, shiny and healthy, give them a sprinkling of water with a hose or a rose can. The older leaves on the plant tend to be lustreless and pale, and later turn yellow. These leaves often harbour insects and pests, and serve as initial sites of infection. Remove and destroy these old unhealthy and affected leaves.

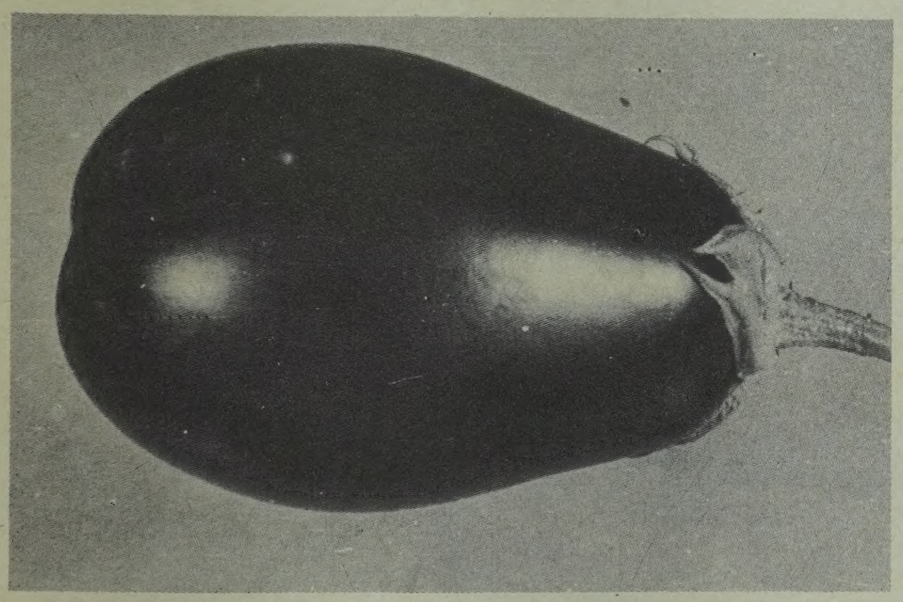
When seeds are being raised into seedlings in germination pans, during initial stages one faces the menace of sparrows pinching and eating away newly unfolding, tender leaves, leaving only the bare stem of the seedling. This retards the growth of the seedling, which consequently results in delayed transplanting. At times, the damage is so severe that the seedlings do not survive. It is therefore better to raise the seedlings in pots under a wire net. If this is not possible, then, as an alternative step, cut aluminium foils, into 2.5 x 7 cms. rectangles, punch a hole at one end and tie them with string on thin wooden pegs about 15-20 cms. long. Put two or three such pegs in a pot. See that the foils are swinging and flashing in the air. Birds seem to be more scared of flashing light than of a bursting sound. To keep rats and rodents away, plug their approaches — such as open drain pipes. Also use **rodaferin, ratol, ratox, zinc phosphide** and/or other rodenticides.

In the rainy season, earthworms multiply fast and the pot becomes infested with them. To control the earthworms drench the pot soil with 1.0 per cent sodium bicarbonate solution.

Due to constant watering, the pots become slimy and harbour mould and algae on the outer surface. This not only giv-

es a shabby appearance but also causes difficulty in handling the pots. To give a new look to the pots, scrub them from the outside and wash thoroughly. After cleaning, let the pot dry under the sun. Then apply a coat of thin paste of **geru** dissolved in water, add **sares** (a paint gum) to make it fast, if so desired. Let the paint dry and the pots will look new and attractive again.

The floor or the parapet wall often gets soiled and dirty with the drainout water of the pots. Use special catch trays available for the purpose. The use of such trays is a must when plants are kept on the floor inside the room. During watering of pots, water often spills and splashes out, excess water runs down the drain hole and all this takes away some fine soil particles. This results in the lowering of the soil level in the pot. It is therefore necessary to replenish this loss by adding and mixing



dry, sieved farmyard manure every three months or so. This will also add to the fertility and improve the soil texture, making the soil loose and workable.

Potted plants often grow unshapely, with branches running into each other, causing difficulty in harvesting and other operations. They also look ugly. Slight judicious trimming will keep the plant in good shape.

To attend to kitchen gardening jobs properly and efficiently, one should have the right type of tools for each particular job. The common hand tools required for kitchen gardening are as follows:

A sickle, a kurpee, a garden trowel, a hand fork, a dibbler, a weeding hook, a budding/pruning knife, a pair of scissors, a powrah, a gameli, a spade, and a fine nozzle watering can.

For field work, a kudali, a garden rake, and a pick axe would come handy. Other accessories required are a bucket, a mug, a hose pipe, a jumbo plunger duster for dusting powder, a pneumatic hand compression sprayer for spraying, metal labels, marking pencil etc.

Fertilizers normally used are:
N: Ammonium sulphate or urea
P: Superphosphate

K: Muriate of potash

NPK (mixture: Suphala 15:15:15, also available in different grades.

A hobbyist needs to visit a hobby shop to procure the prerequisites. For kitchen gardening, one has to approach a nurseryman and a seed dealer. The addresses of some reputed seed dealers in Bombay are given here for the benefit of the local hobbyists.

1. Palekar & Co., Sitaram bldg, Phule market.

2. Namdeo Umaji & Co., 161, Dr. Ambedkar Rd. Byculla.

3. Ratanshi Velji Shah, 175, Dr. Ambedkar Rd., Byculla.

4. Bombay Seed Supply Co., Dr. Ambedkar Rd., Byculla.

5. Indo-American Seed Co., Century Bazar, Century Bhavan, A. Besant Rd., Prabhadevi.

6. Modern Farms and Gardens, V. N. Purav Marg, Chembur.

Armed with all the information provided in our mini-series, you are bound to have good success in kitchen gardening. We wish you the best.

Concluded

THE OLD TRUNK IN THE ATTIC

Continued from page 29

of them, Rubina and Hena, had wanted to sleep on it. As it was Hena's and as she was barely two and Rubina four, naturally, she had her way. I was the arbitrator. Rubina sulked, and for three days wouldn't speak to either of us. I forget how we all became friends once more.

It was voted that it should not be discarded.

Hena fished out an old doll, quite broken, which had first belonged to an aunt, who had given it to me and I had passed it on to Rubina, who had broken it, and the poor doll had somehow found its way into the trunk.

"Shall we keep it?" I asked, because, I didn't want to part with it. Both Rubina and Hena nodded vigorously, and Hena's towel slipped over her eyes, and she hurriedly pushed it back.

From under the pile of clothes, Rubina fished out the "treasure box" in which I had stored strange looking, vividly coloured stones, bits of charcoal, glass beads which we pretended were twinkling, sparkling diamonds, and chains made of broken bits of coloured bangles, and many such things.

I had always kept the box well-hidden, and how it came to be in the old trunk, I could not understand.

We spent a good half-hour going through the "treasures," and Hena was quite fascinated by them.

"I want it," she finally announced. "I want it as my 'heritance'."

"All right, Hena," I said. "You shall have it as your inheritance."

"Shall we give it to her the way you gave it to me?" asked Rubina. I agreed.

We stood around the trunk. Rubina held up the box in both hands. Hena and I held up our right hands, palm outwards, and I asked her to repeat after me.

"I, Hena Ali Shah..." I intoned.

"I, Hena Ali Shah" repeated Hena solemnly.

"... do swear to sincerely honour and protect..."

"... do swear to sincerely honour and protect..."

"... my inheritance given to me this day."

"... my inheritance given to me this day."

Thus, another "antique" was kept back.

We turned our attention to the clothes — small frocks, dungarees, shorts, shirts, skirts. Hena was quite surprised at the size of her first tiny shorts, and was quite pleased that she was now a "big girl."

We picked up every dress and folded it neatly and kept it back in the trunk. They were too precious to be thown or given away.

Next we turned to the higgedly-piggedly pile of books which had accumulated since I was in the first standard, — mine, Rubina's and Hena's.

It was an exciting time we had as we looked at Hena's first attempts at writing, and her scrawly drawings, which she had proudly showed us.

Turn by turn two of us breathed down each other's neck giggling at the funny drawings which we had considered to be so good years ago, and counted the number of "good" marked by the teachers.

Like other things, the books, too, were piled neatly back into the trunk.

Everything we had taken out for sorting was back in the trunk now, and only an armload of waste papers was left!

A little later we heard somebody climbing the stairs. It was Mummy.

"It's time for tea, she said. "Have you finished?"

"Yes," chorused the three of us.

"But I don't see anything which is to be thrown or given away," said Mummy, looking a bit puzzled.

We were quite red in the face. Rubina managed to stammer out, "You see, Mummy... We...we...we still love everything so much that we...that we..."

"That we've kept back everything!" I finished for her.

"Except for this!" said Hena, displaying the armful of waste paper she was carrying, not to be left out.

Mummy smiled a warm, motherly smile.

"Oh, well. Maybe some other time," she said.

She gave a hand dragging the old trunk back into its place. As we went downstairs, I took a long, last look at its aged but hefty shape.

It was a treasure trove of memories.

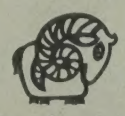
THIS WEEK FOR YOU

FOR THE WEEK MAY 25—JUNE 1, 1980
John Naylor

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK:

You will be winding up some of your business interests and beginning fresh endeavours. So the next several weeks will be restless, making inquiries, sending in applications. In family life two of your relatives will influence your affairs — one elderly person who will tend to dampen your enthusiasm between now and September, and the other, a male, whose influence could be mainly helpful if you don't allow him to dominate. If courting, it could be wedding bells before 1980 ends. If not, there will be plenty of romantic opportunities during the twelvemonth. If married, you may be adding to your family. New ambitions will succeed if you are prepared to put in hard work for a year or two.

ARIES
(Mar 22 — Apr 20)



A sociable week, with some other pleasing item in the mail. There will be unexpected encounters, and strangers will tend to be lucky for you. Keep your ambitions in mind, for people you meet socially could be helpful.

TAURUS
(Apr 21 — May 21)

A financially lucky week as extra funds will be available, should you need them. Both business and personal issues will benefit from a bit of expenditure. Buying a minor luxury may prove a wise investment!

GEMINI
(May 22 —June 21)

Set your ambitions high. The more you communicate, the better you'll get on. You might alter plans to your advantage. If you have done some soul-searching in the recent past, you'll be on an even keel again, feeling very confident.

CANCER
(June 22 — July 23)

Venus in your sign until early June will influence your affairs and personal and business relationships should benefit, but the social side of life will be more than usually important just now.

LEO
(July 24 — Aug 23)

Life is happy and friendly, but there could be something missing in your love life. Romance will come to the fore a little later when ardent stars begin to affect you. This week, you find much affection and goodwill.

VIRGO
(Aug 24 — Sept 23)

Good week to push along with your plans and ambitions. There is something special in your personality just now and you should succeed. A person of influence could take a very rewarding interest in you.

LIBRA
(Sept 24 — Oct 23)

Health on uptrend. Later in the year, energetic stars will help your plans, which may be hanging fire at present, to attain fruition. Take some minor initiatives this week, get to know new people in business and social circles.

SCORPIO
(Oct 24 — Nov 22)

Opposition transits could have caused a hold-up in plans, brought an unenthusiastic mood. This phase is over and several planets are well placed to your sign now. Travel will be lucky for you, could bring romance if single.

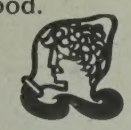
SAGITTARIUS
(Nov 23 — Dec 22)

Organise your schedule to take in the essentials and don't get too involved in the problems of companions. People will tend to lean on you too much, but life is too busy for you and your own problems need priority.

CAPRICORN
(Dec 23 — Jan 20)

Others will call the tune between now and August, so adjust as best you can. It won't be a bad thing to hand over responsibility to others. Harness your energy to important issues. You'll be in a restless mood.

AQUARIUS
(Jan 21 — Feb 19)



Mercury is influencing your love life from a sympathetic angle. If single, some happy new meetings. Your popularity will be high; there'll be unexpected invitations. A lucky time for cash matters with good buys, and perhaps a minor windfall.

PISCES
(Feb 20 — Mar 21)

There may be irritations in close relationships and financial matters. You must follow a cautious policy and avoid impulsive action. Postpone changes. You'll get your heart's desire later in 1980.

The optimist looks into a mirror and becomes too optimistic, the pessimist too pessimistic. The way you look to others is apt to be nearer the truth than the way you may look to yourself.

Tom Sims

The only view most women are interested in is the one in the mirror.

Alice Grant Rosman

We do not really see ourselves. All mirrors are in fact quite useless except the living, human mirrors who reflect us: they do not lie.

Francois Mauriac

THE THINGS THEY SAY ABOUT MIRRORS

There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle, or the mirror that reflects it.

Edith Wharton

If ignorance is bliss, why place a brighter light above the mirror?

Gertrude Pierson

Every man carries with him through life a mirror, as unique and impossible to get rid of as his shadow.

W. H. Auden

There is a fascinating difference between the way men and women see themselves in a mirror. When a man looks in the glass, he does not see a ghastly, ungroomed creature. Only on his most despondent days will he notice the thinning hair, the spare tyre, the sagging jawline. But a woman — a woman has been trained since she was a little girl to look in the mirror to check what's wrong. Women are inclined to see their flaws rather than their assets. A woman looks in the mirror and thinks, "I need more lipstick," or, "I look tired today," — even the most beautiful woman.

Joyce Brothers

David Gunston

The unique two-in-one:

ZENITH the refrigerator that's also a water cooler

Yes. It's the Zenith 165-litre refrigerator bringing you, for the first time in India, the additional convenience of a water cooler.

The water cooler built into Zenith, is not just an innovation for convenience. World leaders in refrigeration, have recognised this to be a necessary advance to make the refrigerator function most efficiently.

Up with cooling efficiency, down with power consumption

With the water cooler built into Zenith – the refrigerator door is opened for only half the number of times. The result – the cooling efficiency goes up, the strain on the compressor comes down, thereby saving electricity.

Functionally a leader, technically world class

Fedders Lloyd—the makers of Zenith, have had over twenty five years of association with world leaders in air-conditioning and refrigeration technology.

The heart of Zenith – its compressor, is made in collaboration with Tecumseh, U S A, world leaders in compressor technology.

The insulation material, 'Spintex', which keeps cold in and heat out is the product of collaboration with Johns-Manville International Corporation USA, leaders in insulation technology.

Unique two-way defrosting system

Besides Zenith is the only refrigerator in India, that can be restarted when it is under defrosting. A great convenience when guests drop in suddenly.

Being world class for Indian conditions

To protect the refrigeration system from vagaries of voltage fluctuation, Zenith comes with a built-in automatic stabilizer (optional) that withstands the widest fluctuation in voltage that can normally occur.

We invite you for a demonstration

Come, see Zenith for yourself. It's got everything you are looking for: tilting bottle rack, removable butter cheese boxes, and egg rack, two extra ice trays, largest freezer and more storage space

You'll then discover that you can pay more, but can't buy better than Zenith.

FEDDERS LLOYD

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Truly, years ahead. Truly, world class.

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ery woman knows that when she wants to look her best, her hair must thoroughly, radiantly clean. Pond's Shampoo is extra rich in lather, get even the longest hair beautifully clean and manageable.
atever your kind of hair, there's a fragrant Pond's Shampoo for you.

Pond's Shampoo

as the extra lather long hair needs

Pon